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TRAINING FOR SOUL-WINNING

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TRAINING FOR SOUL-WINNING

A Manual for Christian Workers

BY
E. E. VIOLETTE

CINCINNATI
The Standard Publishing Company

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Dedicated to Joseph W. Camp,
who taught me the way of life.

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INTRODUCTION

The chief end of all Christian enterprise is soul-winning. Saved men and women are to become saviors of the unsaved. Even Bible study is of little value unless it brings us to see our duties and privileges as soul-winners. The express purpose of this work is to put soul-winning on a Scriptural basis.

We are living in an age of multitudinous methods in the field of evangelism. And not all evangelism is conducive to soul-winning. We ought to eliminate systems and schemes for reaching the masses and give the Bible the right of way in the hearts of men. We can not afford to take any risk when the soul of our neighbor is at stake.

This little book has been prepared with a view to aid all who desire to see the church at work doing the real task that is set before her. The methods suggested in the various lessons have been tried for many years and found not wanting. The book does not pretend to exhaust any of the subjects discussed. It is comprehensive enough, however, to fulfill its purpose of enabling the soul-winner to aid the inquirer to *make a right start in the Christian life.* Many soul-winning books have come from the press, but this work seeks to cover an untouched field.

"Training for Soul-winning" suggested itself as a suitable title for a volume of this sort. The book may be put to four uses:

1. Organized classes may use it as a text-book on soul-winning.

2. Individuals may use it in actual soul-winning.

3. It may be used as a brief reference-work.

4. It may be put into the hands of inquirers.

The church that would have an ingathering of souls ought to train her membership in the work of soul-winning.

THE AUTHOR.

LESSON I.

BIBLE STUDY.

LESSON TEXT.—"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."—John 8:32.

The successful soul-winner must have an adequate knowledge of the Bible. Any one with grace, charm and skill may win men and women to himself or his system, but whoever would win souls to Christ must win them by the power of God's word. The God of the mountains, the stars and the universe is the God of the Bible. The voices of nature are multitudinous, but the sure message of salvation from sin is clearly unfolded in the book of revelation—the Holy Scriptures. It is possible for men to know all about the mountains and the stars through study of the sciences, and yet remain ignorant of the most important thing in life—the Bible. If one would know the stars, he must study astronomy. If he would know the flowers, he must study botany. If he would know God, his fellows, himself, his duty and destiny, he must study the Bible. If we assume to approach a man about his salvation, he has a right to expect that we know what we are talking about. A blunder at this point is unpardonable, and even zeal can not atone for misinformation given in ignorance.

TEN REASONS FOR BIBLE STUDY.

1. The very character of the Bible precludes the possibility of knowing it without diligent study.

2. We may gain a knowledge of the ordinary book by simply reading it, but the subject-matter of the Bible demands careful study.

3. A knowledge of the truth shall make us free. It is absolutely impossible for us to free others unless we are free ourselves.

4. We can not make clear to unsaved men and women what we do not understand ourselves. It is folly for the blind to attempt to lead the blind.

5. Many whom we seek to save may have a knowledge of the Bible, and, with it, put us to shame unless we are equipped with the power of Scripture knowledge.

6. A knowledge of the Bible is absolutely the most powerful weapon in the warfare of life. It can be used in every emergency between the cradle and the grave.

7. There is a message in the Bible to cover every condition of every human being in every walk of life. Study will show us how to apply the teachings of God's word to the needs of our fellows.

8. The greatest need of the church to-day is to take God at his word. How can we take God at his word unless we know what he has told us to do?

9. A generation of Bible students would free our age from modern superstitions and the false things taught in the name of Christianity. A knowledge of the Bible would free humanity and flood the world with the light of salvation.

10. To go on in ignorance would one day make us ashamed of our work. "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).

Ten Results of Bible Study.

1. We can "give a reason for the hope within us."

2. We shall find ourselves in a larger world of opportunity.

3. Whatever we do for Christ's sake will be well done.

4. We shall find ourselves leaning constantly on God for help.

5. We shall be more confident of success in soul-winning.

6. We may pass away, but our work shall stand because God's word is abiding.

7. We shall be kept from any selfish motives in the great task of soul-winning.

8. We shall be free from false notions about the wonderful theme of salvation.

9. We shall be satisfied to do God's work in God's way.

10. We shall find supreme happiness and comforting assurance in God's gracious promise: "My word shall not return unto me void."

Note.—The writer does not pretend to say that these are the *only* reasons for Bible study and the *only* results that come from that study. They are a few—a working few—of the hundreds that could be given. They are to be studied for all they are worth. Our aim is to put soul-winning on a Scriptural basis. Let us get these ten reasons and ten results fixed well in mind. They will give us encouragement as we begin our study of the Bible as the chief aid to the soul-winner in his work. We are told that "he that winneth souls is wise." Soul-winning work must be done in a *wise* way.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. Why should a soul-winner have an adequate knowledge of the Bible?

2. Is there any danger of winning souls to ourselves? How may we do this?

3. What power can win men to Christ?

4. When we approach a man about his salvation, what has he a right to expect of us?

5. Why can zeal never atone for ignorance?

6. What are the chief reasons for Bible study?

7. What are the chief results of Bible study?

8. What should be our great aim in soul-winning?

9. Why should we have these things well fixed in mind?

10. Why is the Bible the chief aid in soul-winning?

Memory References.—John 5:39; Acts 17:11; Rom. 15:4; 1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16, 17.

LESSON II.

THE DIVISIONS OF THE BIBLE.

LESSON TEXT.—"God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son."—Heb. 1:1, 2.

A study of the Bible logically begins with its divisions. And here we are likely to fall in with hackneyed methods because they appear simple and easy. The soul-winner can have little to do with the ordinary methods of grouping the books of the Bible and memorizing them with kindergarten rhymes. Each book must stand out in his mind like a separate star or sun, but all must blend in a rich shining to illuminate the pathway of righteousness. He is not supposed to use all of the Bible in winning men to Christ, but he ought to familiarize himself with the Bible so he may know what *not* to use. It is obviously unreasonable and perilous to quote Scripture at random in a task so important as soul-winning. An occasional inquirer will want to cover the ground quite thoroughly, and it is a worth-while achievement to be able to reveal the plan of God in an intelligent fashion, knowing that "the entrance of thy word giveth light."

THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE.

1. The Bible has sixty-six books.

2. These books form two great divisions—the Old and New Testaments.

3. The word "testament" means covenant or will.

4. The distinction between the law of Moses and the gospel of Christ is the key to a proper division of the Bible.

5. The law began at Sinai and continued until the gospel took its place.

6. The gospel began at Jerusalem.

7. Therefore the Old Covenant includes Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; and the Acts of the Apostles is literally the first book of the New Covenant.

8. For the purpose of the soul-winner, then, we have forty-three books in the Old Covenant and twenty-three in the New.

9. We must emphasize the following facts:

(1) Christ was born, lived and died under the law.

(2) The Four Gospels contain a record of his existence under the law.

(3) Christ came to fulfill the law.

(4) The gospel in its fullness was first preached in Jerusalem.

10. The law was for the Jews; the gospel is for all races.

Grouping the Books.

1. The Old Testament is properly divided into eight parts: Creation, Law, History, Devotion, Mourning, Major Prophets, Minor Prophets, Biography.

(1) *Creation*—Genesis.

(2) *Law*—Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

(3) *History*—Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.

(4) *Devotion*—Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon.

(5) *Mourning*—Ecclesiastes, Lamentations.

(6) *Major Prophets*—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel.

(7) *Minor Prophets*—Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

(8) *Biography*—Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.

2. The New Testament is properly divided into five parts: History of Making Christians, Special Letters, General Letters, Personal Letters, Book of Consummation.

(1) *History of Making Christians*—Acts.

(2) *Special Letters*—Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, Hebrews.

(3) *General Letters*—James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, Jude.

(4) *Personal Letters*—1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, 2 John, 3 John.

(5) *Book of Consummation*—Revelation.

The Law and the Gospel.

1. Exodus 20 is the chapter of the law.

2. Acts 2 is the chapter of the gospel.

3. Acts 15 will show the relation of the law and the gospel.

4. Hebrews 7, 8 and 9 will show how the law has passed away.

Note.—These six chapters should be read in connection with this lesson. God's whole scheme as to law and gospel is epitomized in them.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. Why should we avoid hackneyed methods in Bible study?

2. Why should each Bible book have its own special meaning for the soul-winner?

3. Why is it perilous to quote Scripture at random?

4. Why do Matthew, Mark, Luke and John properly belong to the Old Testament?

5. How did Christ fulfill the law?

6. Why is Acts of the Apostles really the first book of the New Testament?

7. What does Acts 15 say about Christians and the law?

8. Why is it important to know the divisions of the Bible?

9. To whom was the law given, and for what purpose?

10. Does the gospel apply to the Jews as well as other races? Why?

Memory References.—Matt. 5:17-20; Acts 15:24; Rom. 10:4; 2 Cor. 3:6-11; Gal. 3:11-13, 23-25; Col. 2:14-17; Heb. 7:22; 8:13; 9:16, 17.

LESSON III.

SPECIAL SOUL-WINNING BOOKS.

LESSON TEXT.—"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise."—Prov. 11:30.

Each book of the Bible has its distinctive message for the child of God. It is manifestly impossible to expect the average inquirer to make a complete investigation of the Bible before accepting Christ. Unless he could approach the Bible intelligently, there are parts of it that might cause him to misunderstand Christ's message and mission altogether. It behooves the Christian, therefore, to become adept in the use of the Bible. There are special books that are particularly designed to reach the heart of the unsaved. The soul-winner ought to have a special knowledge of these special books. This special knowledge will give him power to accomplish the task to which he has set his heart. The special soul-winning books open the door of God's house to wandering souls and put men and women into the way of becoming familiar with the whole wonderful plan of our Father in heaven.

THE SPECIAL BOOKS.

1. These books are five in number: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts.

2. John should be studied first because it goes back to the very beginning in deifying Christ.

3. Mark should be studied next because it omits

the genealogy of Christ and contains minor details that prepare the reader for the more comprehensive record in Matthew.

4. Matthew comes next because of its citations of Old Testament prophecy and its wonderful and orderly statement of the career of Christ.

5. Luke should then follow because it leads the student right into the Book of Acts without any interruption in the record.

6. By studying the books in this order the soul-winner will be able to show the thoughtful inquirer how to identify the Christ of Acts with the Christ of the Four Gospels. When this Christ is thus identified, the heart of the unsaved man will be touched by the power of what he has read and heard. It is ours to lift up the Christ in our teaching, assured that he will do the drawing.

7. The soul-winner ought to completely master the Book of Acts because it is the one book in the whole Bible that tells how men and women were brought to Christ in the New Testament times. And the method has not changed by reason of the lapse of years.

8. The Four Gospels will reveal the soul-saving commission which Christ gave to his disciples, and the Book of Acts will show how the apostles carried out this commission.

9. Let the books be studied in a way that will bring the student to catch the *spirit* of Christ and his apostles. This will keep one from being carried away by the *spirit* of our age.

10. A study of the prophecies mentioned in the Four Gospels will prepare the soul-winner with sufficient arguments to prove that Christ came "according to the scriptures."

CONTENTS OF SPECIAL BOOKS IN OUTLINE.

1. *John.*
   (1) The prologue—the eternal Word with God; the Baptist's witness; the incarnated Word, declaring the Father; rejected by the Jews, yet accepted by believers (1:1-18).
   (2) Revelation of Jesus by preaching of John (1:19-34).
   (3) Calling disciples (1:35-51).
   (4) Beginning miracles at Cana (2:1-11).
   (5) Cleansing temple, doing "works" in Jerusalem, Samaria and Galilee (2:12-4:54).
   (6) General account of his teaching, work and life (5:1-16:33).
   (7) Prayer for unity (17).
   (8) Passion and resurrection (18-20).
   (9) Epilogue (21).
2. *Mark.*
   (1) Baptism by John the Baptist (1:1-11).
   (2) East Galilean ministry (1:14-7:23).
   (3) North Galilean ministry (7:24-9:50).
   (4) Close of Peræan ministry (10:1-31).
   (5) Last journey and passion (10:32-15:47).
   (6) Resurrection, ascension and commission (16).
3. *Matthew.*
   (1) Genealogy, birth and infancy of Jesus, with flight into Egypt and return to Nazareth (1, 2).
   (2) Baptism by John (3).
   (3) Temptation (4:1-11).
   (4) Ministry in Galilee and important messages and wonderful events associated therewith (4:12-13:53).

(5) Second ministry in Galilee, including many disputes (14-18).
(6) To Judea beyond Jordan and finally to Jerusalem (19, 20).
(7) Contentions in the Holy City (21-25).
(8) Passion, trials, death and burial (26, 27).
(9) Resurrection and commission.

4. *Luke.*
   (1) Introduction, birth of John, birth and childhood of Jesus (1, 2).
   (2) John's preaching and genealogy of Christ (3).
   (3) Christ's temptation and his ministry in Galilee (4-9:50).
   (4) Ministry in Peræa (9:51-14:33).
   (5) Experiences in Jericho (14:34-18:35).
   (6) At Jerusalem in midst of contentions (18:36-19:21).
   (7) Passover, trials, death and burial (22, 23).
   (8) Resurrection and ascension (24).
5. *Acts.*
   (1) Account of ascension and return of disciples to Jerusalem to await the promised power (1).
   (2) First gospel sermon and establishment of church (2).
   (3) Spread of gospel in Judea and Samaria, and first persecution (3-8).
   (4) Saul and Cornelius converted (9, 10).
   (5) Gentiles and "new name" (11, 12).
   (6) Acts of Paul and first missionary journey (13-15:5).
   (7) Council at Jerusalem (15:6-35).
   (8) Second missionary journey (15:36-18:22).

(9) Third missionary journey (18:23-21:17).
(10) Imprisonment and voyage to Rome (21:18 to 28).

NOTE.—Acts is more fully covered in a subsequent series of lessons.

LESSON REVIEW FROM MEMORY.

1. Why gain a knowledge of the Four Gospels first?
2. Why is Acts particularly adapted to the needs of the unsaved?
3. In what order should the five special soul-saving books be studied? Why?
4. Why is it important to catch the *spirit* of Christ?
5. Why prove that Christ came "according to the scriptures"?
6. Give an outline of John.
7. Give an outline of Mark.
8. Give an outline of Matthew.
9. Give an outline of Luke.
10. Give an outline of Acts.

MEMORY REFERENCES.—Matt. 1:21; 7:21; 16:16; 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 2:10-14; 24:46, 47; John 1:36; 3:5; 14:6; 17:21-23; Acts 4:12; 17:30; Isa. 62:1, 2.

LESSON IV.

SIN.

LESSON TEXT.—"For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. 6:23.

The winner of souls must not be chagrined because the Bible is so frank about sin. The Bible is our one best argument against sin. It is really the one comprehensive treatise on the forbidding and wretched theme. Fierce denunciation of sin and wholesale condemnation of the sinner are not vital elements in winning the sinner from the error of his way. It is better to convince him with a few great truths as they have come to us from God. Sin is the thing from which men are to be saved, and the Bible gives us abundant material to use in teaching the meaning of sin. If we grasp God's estimate of sin, we are prepared to deal with the sinner kindly, yet firmly and courageously. The Bible makes sin a terrible thing. It is the one thing that stands between man and God. While we can hardly expect to completely master its teachings on the subject in this lesson, yet we may gain a knowledge of it by classifying a few important portions of Scripture that have to do with sin.

BIBLE FACTS ABOUT SIN.

1. It is the transgression of God's law (1 John 3:4).

2. The way of sinners is hard (Prov. 13:15).

3. Man wrongs his own soul by sinning (Prov. 8:36).
4. The sinner is a destroyer of good (Eccl. 9:18).
5. God turns a deaf ear to the sinner (John 9:31).
6. All have sinned (Rom. 3:23).
7. Wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23).
8. Death is sin's finished work (Jas. 1:15).
9. Sinning soul shall die (Ezek. 18:4).
10. Sin can not enter heaven (Rev. 21:27).

NOTE.—Sin is terribly described in these ten statements. God's law is broken; man walks in a hard way to sin; he wrongs his own soul; he destroys good in himself and others; he puts himself out of harmony with God; no one can escape, for all have sinned; death is the pay; death is the finished work; the soul shall die because of sin; heaven is closed to him who continues in sin. A grip on these facts will fill us with determination to save men.

SINNERS AND THEIR FATE.

1. Cain (Gen. 4:3-15).
2. Haman (Esth. 7:1-10).
3. Saul (1 Sam. 31:1-13).
4. Judas (Matt. 27:1-6).
5. Ananias (Acts 5:1-5).
6. The Rich Glutton (Luke 16:19-31).
7. The Prodigal (Luke 15:11-32).

NOTE.—This is simply a working-list intended to be suggestive rather than exhaustive. The worker who is willing to look up the scores of Scripture records of the men and women who violated God's law will be prepared with sufficient arguments to convince anybody. Do not be afraid to use these examples, because they are God-given. Study and analyze such characters as the seven

named above. In such study one will gain a complete mastery of the meaning of sin in the life. It is necessary for us to be able to show men the *sinfulness of sin.*

The Nature of Sin.

1. Its pleasure is temporary (Heb. 11:25).
2. It is deceiving to the sinner (Prov. 14:12).
3. It will find the sinner out (Num. 32:23).
4. It will return to the sinner (Gal. 6:7).
5. It destroys the conscience (Eph. 4:19).
6. It changes honor into shame (Hos. 4:7).
7. It haunts the sinner (Ps. 51:3).
8. It is the forerunner of sorrow (Ps. 38:17, 18).
9. It puts pain into death (1 Cor. 15:56).
10. It is humanity's great curse (Gen. 3:17-19).

Sin is an effort on man's part to enjoy the unenjoyable; it is a blind and foolish attempt to do the impossible, unreasonable and unthinkable. Every soul-winner ought to press home these truths in winning others to Christ.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. What is sin? What its nature?
2. How does man wrong his soul in sin?
3. How is sin a destroyer of good?
4. What is death that is brought on by sin?
5. What is the finished work of sin?
6. Tell the story of Haman's sin.
7. What was the chief sin of Judas?
8. Tell the story of the rich glutton.
9. Tell the story of the prodigal.

Memory References.—Rom. 6:1, 2; Job 1:22; John 8:7-11; Matt. 9:13; John 16:7-11; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 John 1:8; 3:9; Ps. 1:1.

LESSON V.

SALVATION.

LESSON TEXT.—"Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."—1 Tim. 1:15.

Salvation is the heart of the Bible message. Whatever else is taught in Scripture, salvation is its first and most important theme. The whole race is confronted with the question of sin and conscious of the magnitude of its curse, and our richest heritage is God's promise of deliverance in the name of Jesus Christ. The primal idea of salvation is deliverance, but the Bible writers use various terms to signify the state or condition of one who is saved. Salvation, justification, forgiveness, redemption, reconciliation, sanctification, pardon and adoption all have practically the same meaning. The personal worker must get this well established in his mind, because he is constantly confronted with people who have false notions about sanctification being something that follows salvation. The saved man is delivered from sin; he is pardoned, redeemed, justified, reconciled, forgiven and sanctified. Every side of life is touched by these words which may be used at liberty in showing the meaning of salvation.

THREE GREAT SALVATIONS.

1. Salvation from past sin (Acts 2:38).
2. Salvation from present sin (Rom. 8:1-10).
3. Eternal salvation (2 Tim. 2:10).

NOTE.—The fact that salvation in Christ covers past, present and future of man's existence must be made clear to the inquirer. Man alone can never correct his past; he must have help from God. The present is full of temptations that he is unable to resist without divine aid. And God's promise of eternal salvation which death can not touch—undying life in Christ—is the master hope of humanity.

THE NATURE OF SALVATION.

1. Saved from sin (Matt. 1:21).
2. Saved from self (Rom. 12:13).
3. Saved from enemies (Luke 1:71).
4. Saved from guilt of sin (1 John 3:20-31).
5. Saved from fear (1 John 4:18).
6. Saved from death (Jas. 5:20).
7. Saved from punishment (2 Thess. 1:7-12).
8. Saved to serve (Rom. 12:1).
9. Saved to save others (1 Cor. 9:22).
10. Saved to exalt Christ (Matt. 5:16).

Salvation is not a small issue that has to do with only one phase of life. The many-sided splendor of the theme ought to cause man to make it the first concern of life. Whoever is not saved is lost. Certainly no thoughtful person can behold the beauties of salvation without falling in love with God's plan to save us from the low and harmful things of earth.

SCRIPTURAL SYNONYMS FOR SALVATION.

1. Redemption (Rom. 3:24).
2. Pardon (Isa. 55:7).
3. Reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:19).
4. Forgiveness (Col. 1:14).
5. Deliverance (Ezra 9:13).

6. Justification (Rom. 4:25).
7. Election (2 Pet. 1:10).
8. Adoption (Rom. 8:15).
9. Sanctification (Heb. 13:12).
10. Accepted (Eph. 1:6).

This list is suggested because many church-members are unfamiliar with the language of the Bible which describes the one who has been saved by the gospel of Christ. Successful soul-winning is almost impossible without Scriptural versatility. The Bible has the right words for us if we will but become familiar with them. We limit ourselves when we narrow our system down to one word in seeking to describe the meaning of salvation.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. What is the chief message of the Bible?
2. What great truth confronts all mankind?
3. What are the various words that mean salvation?
4. Explain the shades of meaning in these terms.
5. What are the three salvations?
6. What part of existence is covered in salvation?
7. Name the things from which we are saved.
8. Name the things for which we are saved.
9. What is the value of Scriptural versatility?
10. How do we often limit ourselves?

Memory References.—2 Tim. 3:15; Ps. 3:8; Heb. 2:11, 12; Isa. 35:10; Num. 14:19; Luke 19:9; Tit. 2:11-14.

LESSON VI.

GOD.

LESSON TEXT.—"And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him."—Heb. 11:6.

One of the most striking things revealed in studying the Bible is that not one verse in any chapter of any of its books is devoted to an argument concerning the existence of God. It never occurred to the Bible writers to doubt God's existence any more than they thought of doubting their own. They all "lived and moved and had their being" in an atmosphere that presupposed the existence of God. Whoever would be true to himself must live in that same atmosphere. Atheism is only another name for tremendous folly. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." By denying God a place in his own universe the atheist denies his own right to live and enjoy the wise provisions that have been made for his welfare. It would be unpardonable folly for one to try to argue himself out of existence.

TWO IMPORTANT FACTS.

1. The God of nature has provided for every need of man's physical body.
   (1) Nature supplies food for his hunger.
   (2) She supplies water to quench his thirst.
   (3) Every animal need is met with a natural complement.

2. The God of the Bible has provided for every need and hope of the soul.

(1) He offers salvation from sin.

(2) He comforts in sorrow.

(3) He promises life after death.

CONCLUSION.—The God of nature and the God of the Bible are one. There is no conflict between God's word and God's world.

THE ATHEIST'S CREED.

"There is no God." Therefore,

1. The order of creation is fortuitous (comp. Gen. 1:1, 2).

2. Law and design are accidental (comp. Ps. 19:1, 2).

3. Man is no more than other animals (comp. Gen. 1:26, 27).

4. Prayer is unanswered (comp. 1 Pet. 3:12).

5. There is no salvation (comp. Heb. 7:25).

6. There is no comfort in sorrow (comp. Rev. 7:17).

7. Christ is not the son of God, but is an impostor (comp. John 14:6).

8. The church is a human institution (comp. Matt. 16:18).

9. The Bible is false (comp. Isa. 55:10, 11).

10. Death ends all. There is naught beyond the grave (comp. 1 Cor. 15:53, 54).

NOTE.—It may teach the unbeliever a valuable lesson to let him face these conclusions of atheism. Denying God makes a grim and ghastly program for us all. How much more beautiful are the lessons of comparison given above. God's word for it is sufficient for his children.

The God of the Bible.

1. He is man's Creator (Gen. 2:7).
2. He is just (Isa. 45:20-22).
3. He is merciful (Dan. 9:9, 10).
4. He is love (1 John 4:16).
5. He is unchanging (Jas. 1:17).
6. He is not willing that any should perish (2 Pet. 3:9).
7. He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:5-8).
8. He is our Father (1 Cor. 8:5, 6).
9. He is eternal (Ps. 90:1, 2).
10. He is a spirit (John 4:24).

The soul-winner must become familiar with the attributes of God as these things are given in his word. The God of the Bible is not the monster that unbelief has always supposed him to be. The unsaved man needs to have a vision of a God who has exhausted the resources of omnipotence in his efforts to save man from sin. If we seem to find it impossible to bring inquirers to an understanding of what it means to love God, we may bring them to the love of the *attributes* of God—mercy, purity and justice. Whoever loves these things will soon learn to love God. The primary object of this lesson is to put this almost unapproachable theme on a working basis. Let no worker assume to try to tell anybody all about God.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. What are the two outstanding truths of the lesson text?

2. Why do the Bible writers never argue to prove the existence of God?

3. Why is atheism folly?
4. What has the God of nature provided?
5. What has the God of the Bible provided?
6. Name the articles in the atheist's creed and the Scriptures contradicting them.
7. Name the chief attributes of God.
8. Why become familiar with the attributes of God?
9. How may one be taught to love God?
10. What should no worker assume to do?

MEMORY REFERENCES.—Ex. 3:13, 14; Deut. 33:26, 27; Josh. 1:9; Isa. 66:1, 2; Dan. 5:23; Acts 17:23-29.

LESSON VII.

JESUS CHRIST.

LESSON TEXT.—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."—Matt. 16:16.

All Scripture centers in Jesus of Nazareth. Christ is the Christian's commentary on the Bible. All difficulties are swept aside when he is given right of way in the lives of men. The soul-winner must make his every argument and appeal turn around the Christ as the planets move around the sun. No matter what intellectual pathway the inquirer may be inclined to follow, do not allow him to wander too far away from Christ. Some men may find it possible to argue around almost every other issue presented by the personal worker, but no man can forever escape the fact of Christ. Alexander, Cyrus, Washington and Napoleon *were* all facts in history. They are dead and buried, with all other mortals of the past. They conquered others, but death conquered them and ended their history-making. Jesus Christ *was* and *is* a fact. He still lives. He is as much a fact in the conscience and consciousness of the twentieth century as he was in Bethlehem, Nazareth and Jerusalem. Only the morally blind, uncandid and unintelligent would seek to deny this significant truth. Millions sit at his feet as literally as Mary of Bethany sat there. In the name of the living Lord these millions challenge a wayward world at the crossroads of right and wrong. This is the real meaning of Christ as a living fact.

Christ as Viewed by His Enemies.

1. Herod the Great thought he was John the Baptist risen from the dead (Matt. 14:1, 2).

2. The Pharisees wondered at his words (Matt. 22:22).

3. Judas declared himself a sinner for betraying Christ (Matt. 27:4).

4. Pilate's wife believed Christ was a just man (Matt. 27:19).

5. Pilate found no fault in him (John 19:4).

6. The men who crucified him said he was divine (Matt. 27:54).

These conspicuous enemies of Christ were compelled to acknowledge him. His enemies have never been able to evade his divine personality. This is as true to-day as it was before the Gospels were written.

Christ as Viewed by His Friends.

1. The Shepherds (Luke 2:20).
2. The Wise Men (Matt. 2:11).
3. John the Baptist (John 1:29).
4. Peter (Matt. 16:16).
5. Nicodemus (John 3:1, 2).
6. Zaccheus (Luke 19:8, 9).
7. The Multitudes (Matt. 9:8).
8. Doubting Thomas (John 20:28).
9. The Thief (Luke 23:42).
10. God (Matt. 17:5).

There is one universal and age-long verdict among the friends of Christ. He may be tested to-day, and the result will be satisfactory and convincing. Intelligent inquirers will give reasonable heed to the claims of Christ's friends.

Some Convincing Prophecies.

1. The manner of his birth was foretold (Isa. 7: 14).

2. The place of his birth was foretold (Mic. 5:2).

3. The manner of his life was foretold (Isa. 53:1-3).

4. His deportment in his trial was foretold (Isa. 53: 7, 8).

5. The deportment of his enemies was foretold (Zech. 11:13, 14).

By persistent use of the Bible one is soon able to discover the wonderful fulfillment of the Old Testament in the teaching of the New. These five prophecies are given simply as a working basis. We have already had a lesson that points in this direction. Continue the identification of the Christ of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John with the Christ of Acts and the Epistles of the New Testament. Human opinions are superfluous when we have God's word for a ready-reference book. Press home the claim of Christ as he is revealed in the Bible.

What Christ Is to the World.

1. The world's Creator (John 1:1-3).
2. The world's Example (Matt. 16:24).
3. The world's Teacher (Matt. 7:28, 29).
4. The world's Master (John 13:13).
5. The world's Saviour (Luke 19:10).
6. The world's Lord (Rom. 10:12).
7. The world's King (Rev. 11:15).
8. The world's Light (John 8:12).
9. The world's Life (John 14:6).
10. The world's Love (John 3:16).

Can Heaven grant more than such a Christ as this

in whom God and man may always meet? Once the soul-winner is persuaded in his own mind that Christ is all and in all, he shall find that telling the story of Christ to his fellows is the most entrancing thing in the world.

LESSON REVIEW FROM MEMORY.

1. What relation does Christ bear to the Bible?
2. What fact can no man forever escape?
3. Illustrate the fact of Christ as against other great men.
4. What is the meaning of the fact of Christ?
5. Give some of the views of Christ's enemies.
6. What have his enemies never been able to do?
7. Give some of the views of Christ's friends.
8. Give some prophecies concerning Christ.
9. What is the most convincing way to present Christ?
10. What is Christ to the world?

MEMORY REFERENCES.—Isa. 9:6; John 3:17; Acts 4:12; John 20:31; Gal. 2:20; Mark 10:45; Eph. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:21; Heb. 8:6; Rom. 8:3, 4; Mark 14:61, 62.

LESSON VIII.

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

LESSON TEXT.—"And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him."—Acts 5:32.

If we find it difficult to understand the mission and meaning of the Holy Spirit, we have but to remember that Christ has told us of him and his work. The subject may not be intelligently approached except through Christ and his teaching. The personal worker may never be able to give a disquisition on the Holy Spirit, but he will never lead a soul astray if he will keep close to Christ and urge obedience to his commandments. The Holy Spirit, the gift of the Holy Spirit, the fruits of the Holy Spirit—all are promised to the obedient subject of the gospel. Not one blessing is *promised* in disobedience. In the gospel we are taught to love and obey Christ and thus come into possession of the promises. A *command* is to be obeyed; a *promise* is to be enjoyed. Every blessing of the Holy Spirit is *promised,* not *commanded.* Thus, by humble obedience to Christ, we shall become possessors of the Holy Spirit, no matter how difficult it may be to explain the matter.

CHRIST'S TEACHING CONCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT.

"If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth: whom the world can not re-

ceive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him: ye know him; for he abideth with you, and shall be in you. . . . In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. . . . If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. . . . These things have I spoken unto you while yet abiding with you. But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (John 14:15-17, 20, 23, 25, 26). "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I well send him unto you. And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world hath been judged. . . . When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you unto all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he taketh of mine, and shall declare it unto you" (John 16:7-11, 13-15).

A careful analysis of these Scriptures teaches us the following:

1. If we love Christ, we will obey him. "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments."

2. He promises the Holy Spirit for this love and obedience.

3. The Holy Spirit abides continually in the believer.

4. The world can not receive the Holy Spirit.

5. The Spirit is a Comforter.

6. He shall act in Christ's name.

7. He shall teach what Christ has taught.

8. Christ, God and the Holy Spirit all dwell in believers.

9. Whoever has Christ must necessarily possess God and the Holy Spirit.

10. The Holy Spirit was to convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment.

11. The Holy Spirit was to receive the things that belonged to Christ and was to reveal all things needful to the disciples.

12. He was not to speak of himself, but of Christ.

NOTE.—It will simplify matters, then, for the worker to leave out any vague reasoning concerning the Holy Spirit. A working grasp of the subject is given in the above outline, and it should be used in bringing men to Christ. When we are in Christ we possess every blessing promised in his gospel concerning the Holy Spirit.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE SPIRIT.

"The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:16).

1. The Spirit bears witness.

2. The Spirit bears witness by testimony just as any person bears witness.

3. The Spirit's testimony is in words.

4. This makes the testimony intelligent.

5. The Spirit witnesses that we are the children of God.

6. "For ye are all sons of God, through faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26).

7. Faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17).

8. The Bible contains the testimony of the Spirit.

9. Through hearing the testimony we believe, obey and become children of God.

10. The Spirit will not reveal anything to us that is contrary to the teaching of the Bible.

The Fruit of the Spirit.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:22, 23).

1. Love. 2. Joy. 3. Peace. 4. Longsuffering. 5. Kindness. 6. Goodness. 7. Faithfulness. 8. Meekness. 9. Self-control. Whoever possesses these traits is in full possession of the Holy Spirit. These words are easy to understand. They aid us in knowing Christ's meaning when he says: "Therefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20).

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. How must we approach a study of the Holy Spirit?

2. Why urge obedience to Christ?

3. What is the difference between a command and a promise?

4. How does the Spirit dwell in us?

5. Does God dwell in us as the Spirit dwells in us?

6. How does Christ dwell in us?

7. What has the Holy Spirit done?

8. What is the Holy Spirit doing?

9. How does the Spirit bear witness?

10. What does it mean to yield the fruit of the Spirit?

(The lesson on "Divine Healing" contains an account of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the laying on of hands to impart the Spirit.)

MEMORY REFERENCES.—Isa. 63:10; Gen. 6:3; John 6:63; Gal. 4:6; 1 Cor. 3:16; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 8:26; Eph. 6:18; Luke 11:13.

LESSON IX.

THE CHURCH.

LESSON TEXT.—"And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."—Matt. 16:18.

The church is the medium through which salvation is brought to the world. The church is a congregation of the saved whose chief business is to save others. In the light of the Bible no man can exhaust his obligation to God and humanity without membership in the church. The New Testament meaning of the church must be urged upon any whom we seek to save. There are not two processes, one of being saved and the other of joining the church. Whenever we are in Christ we are in his church. The process that puts us into Christ is the identical process that saves us from past sin and puts us into the church. This must be made clear because Christendom is crowded with false notions about the church and church membership. The same things that make one a Christian put him into the church. The Bible makes the church the most important institution on earth. It is a divine institution and its work is divine.

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH.

1. Christ is the head of the church (Eph. 4:23).

2. Christ is the foundation of the church (1 Cor. 3:11).

3. Christ is the creed of the church (Rom. 10: 9, 10).

4. Christ is the saviour of the church (Eph. 5:23).

5. The church is the body of Christ (Col. 1:18).

6. Believers are members of that body (Rom. 12:5).

7. We are baptized into the body—the church (1 Cor. 12:13).

8. We are baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3).

9. The church is the bride of Christ (Rom. 7:4).

10. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15).

These facts will tend to show the vital relation between Christ and the church, and also between the church and the truth. The unsaved must be brought to see that the church is God's one great representative of truth on earth. Whoever would serve God in the largest way must identify his life with the life and work of the church.

The First Church.

The second chapter of Acts gives the record of the first church. A few conspicuous facts should be observed:

1. The church was made up of baptized believers.

2. All who entered the fellowship of the church gave proof of repentance in their obedience.

3. The converts gladly received God's word and obeyed it.

4. The members continued steadfastly in the truth.

5. They continued steadfastly in Christian fellowship.

6. They continued steadfastly in prayer.

7. They had a common faith.

8. They ministered unto the needs of others.
9. They were happy in their singleness of heart.
10. The Lord added to the church daily.

A study of this chapter from verse 37 to the close is essential to an understanding of the first church. The model church must be after this pattern to meet the requirements of God and the needs of humanity. Many have ignored the church because it has not shown itself able to meet the needs of men.

The Church Named.

The church in New Testament times was called by the following names:

1. The church (Eph. 3:10).
2. The church of God (1 Cor. 1:2).
3. The churches of God (1 Thess. 2:14).
4. The church of the Lord (Acts 20:28).
5. The churches of Christ (Rom. 16:16).
6. The body, the church (Col. 1:18).
7. The body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27).
8. The household of God (Eph. 2:19).

The Members Named.

The individual followers of Christ in New Testament times were called by the following names:

1. Disciples (Acts 9:10).
2. Saints (Rom. 8:27).
3. Brethren (Gal. 6:1).
4. Heirs of God (Rom. 8:17).
5. Children of God (Rom. 9:8).
6. Sons of God (1 John 3:2).
7. Christians (Acts 11:26).

We should seek to teach that a return to New Testament names as well as New Testament methods would

simplify matters for us all. The things essential to church membership in the apostolic age are the essentials to-day. The same thing that made a Christian on Pentecost will make a Christian to-day. These points must be pressed home to the inquirer. The worker will be constantly and delightfully surprised to find that the simple New Testament method will reach the mark after everything else has failed.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. How is the world to hear of salvation?
2. What does it mean to be in Christ?
3. What is the relation of Christ to the church?
4. What is the relation of the church to Christ?
5. What constitutes the church?
6. How are we to become members of the church?
7. What is the relation of the church to the truth?
8. Outline the record of the first church.
9. Give the Bible names of the church.
10. Give the Bible names of Christ's followers.

Memory References.—Acts 14:27; Heb. 12:23; 1 Cor. 14:33; 1 Thess. 2:14; 1 Pet. 4:16; Acts 26:28.

LESSON X.

THE NEW BIRTH.

LESSON TEXT.—"Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new."—2 Cor. 5:17.

Much mystery has surrounded Christ's declaration: "Ye must be born anew." The new birth has been made the theme for much useless speculation. The Christian worker faces the task of making the subject clear to the minds that have been confused by the false teachings of the past. Incalculable harm has been wrought by teaching that the sinner is passive in the process of conversion; that he is born again as a little child is born; that he unconsciously enters the family of God without his knowledge or consent. To be born anew is to be regenerated, and regeneration is the simplest way of speaking of the new birth. The process of crossing the line between a life of sin and a life of righteousness is being born anew. The process of coming into Christ is the new birth. For the purposes of the personal worker we are not so much concerned about God's part in the process of regeneration. Our business is to get man to see his part in this important matter. God has intervened to make regeneration possible, but no one can be born again without recognizing his own duty in the new birth. "How can a man be born when he is old?" is a question that opens the way for an explanation of everything in this connection. The gist of the matter is to bring men and women to

a reasonable view of what it means to be born anew.

Five Obvious Facts.

1. A birth signifies a change. The new birth is a change from guilt of sin to the pardon that is in Christ. Coming into Christ makes one a new creature, so the new birth makes a new creature.

2. A birth signifies an awakening to life. The new birth is an awakening to the Christian life. It is a transformation of man's inner nature, an awakening from the old life of unrighteousness.

3. A birth signifies new relationships. Before regeneration one is in the kingdom of Satan, but the new birth makes him a child of God. He bears a new relationship to God and his fellows.

4. A birth signifies new responsibilities. The change wrought by the new birth brings new responsibilities. The new views and new opportunities of the Christian life develop a sense of responsibility that is foreign to the mind of the unregenerate.

5. "Ye must be born again" is simply another way of saying: "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Man can not literally be born again in the sense in which we naturally think of a birth any more than he can become a little child again. To speak of regeneration as a new birth is to use a figurative expression to describe the change that takes place when one accepts Christ as his Saviour, puts him on, and becomes a member of his body.

A full and free discussion of these five obvious facts with the inquirer will, we think, clear the way for a brief yet convincing Bible study in the four chief "born anew" Scriptures.

The Four Scriptures.

1. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

2. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

3. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born anew" (John 3:7).

4. "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently; having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth" (1 Pet. 1:22, 23).

From these Scriptures we observe:

1. That a new birth is essential to a vision of the kingdom of God.

2. That a birth of water and the Spirit is essential to entering the kingdom of God.

3. That a new birth is absolutely necessary.

4. That our souls are purified in obeying the truth.

5. That we are begotten again through the word of God.

When we are purified by obedience we come into that state where we may be likened unto little children; when we are begotten again by the word of God we pass through the process spoken of as the new birth; when we are baptized into Christ we come into the family of God; so the new birth is the process of primary obedience through which the sinner is pardoned and brought into the kingdom of God. We may not be able to explain just *how* God pardons us and just *how*

we are born of the Spirit, but we can do just what God has commanded, and, doing this, we can become his children.

Some Comparisons.

Compare the following passages: John 3:3 and Matt. 5:8. John 3:5 and Mark 16:16. John 3:7 and Luke 13:3. 1 Pet. 1:22, 23 and Gal. 3:26, 27.

(Refer to lessons on "The Holy Spirit," "The Change of Heart" and "Baptism.")

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. What is the chief task so far as the new birth is concerned?
2. How has great harm grown out of the subject?
3. What is regeneration?
4. Name five things signified by the new birth.
5. Can one literally be born again?
6. Repeat and explain the four special passages.
7. How are we purified?
8. Through what are we begotten again?
9. How do we become as little children?
10. What does primary obedience mean?

Memory References.—1 Cor. 14:20; 1 Pet. 1:14; Matt. 5:9; Luke 16:8; Gal. 4:28; 1 John 3:10.

LESSON XI.

THE CHANGE OF HEART.

LESSON TEXT.—"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."—Rom. 10:10.

A certain vague notion that a miraculous change of heart must be *felt* was one of the characteristics of the false system of conversion so common in the past. Many have been kept out of the church while waiting for some *feeling* that they thought should surely come. People were urged to "get that *feeling*," and all sorts of thoughtless promises were made by religious leaders in connection therewith. It never seemed to occur to them to instruct inquirers how to discover any meaning in the Bible use of the word "heart." The notion is frequently discovered yet, but the systems of getting religion of which it was a part are death-struck and dying. The average inquirer now is looking for an intelligent foundation for his faith. An explanation of the Bible teaching about the heart will appeal to the unsaved after mysterious methods have failed utterly.

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE HEART.

By learning the functions of the heart one can easily understand what the Bible means by using the word "heart."

1. "Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" (Matt. 9:4). The heart *thinks*.

2. "Lest haply they should perceive with their eyes,

and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should turn again, and I should heal them" (Matt. 13:15). The heart *understands.*

3. "Why reason ye these things in your hearts?" (Mark 2:8). The heart *reasons.*

4. "Because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9). The heart *believes.*

5. "But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart" (Luke 2:19). The heart *ponders* (meditates).

6. "I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart; and I will glorify thy name for evermore" (Ps. 86:12). The heart *praises* (worships).

7. "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart" (Ps. 119:2). The heart *seeks.*

8. "And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matt. 22:37). The heart *loves.*

9. "Let each man do according as he hath purposed; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7). The heart *purposes* (wills).

10. "Because if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things" (1 John 3:20). The heart *condemns.*

Since we see that the heart thinks, understands, reasons, believes, meditates, worships, seeks, loves, wills and condemns, we know that the Bible means the whole of man's conscious nature—intellect, affections, will and conscience—in the use of the word. This reduces the subject to its very simplest form. There is no excuse for associating the miraculous with the change of heart.

The intellect, affections, will and conscience are changed on the subject of religion just as they would be changed on any other subject.

How the Heart is Changed.

Whoever would know the truth on any subject must *hear* or *read* the truth from a trustworthy source. It is here that we must give the Bible the right of way. It is our one reliable source of authority on the important subject of religion. So, by *reading* the Bible or *hearing* its message preached we reach an intelligent understanding of what it proposes to do for us. In the change that takes place in conversion the following facts are self-evident:

1. The mind must be changed.
2. The affections must be changed.
3. The will must be changed.
4. The conscience must be changed.
5. The life must be changed.

The manner of this change is as follows:

1. *Faith is a change of mind resting upon the truth of the Bible.* The unbeliever *hears* the truth, *believes* it, and his mind is turned in the direction of righteousness. He begins to *think* along other lines. When one changes his way of *thinking* his mind has undergone a change. If one already believes in Christ, his mind should not be changed, because this would bring him to unbelief. When the mind is changed the affections are also changed. The loveliness of Christ wins the affections of the one who begins to think of him.

2. *Repentance is a change of will resting upon the goodness of God as revealed in the Bible.*

"The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance" (Rom. 2:4).

"For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation" (2 Cor. 7:10).

In hearing the gospel one learns how good God has been to provide salvation, and this great goodness of God causes the sinner to be filled with sorrow for sin and awakens in him a determination to sin no longer. He forsakes sin and turns to God for salvation. His will is thus changed in repentance.

3. *Baptism is a change of state resting upon the authority of Christ as revealed in the gospel.*

"All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28: 18, 19).

When the truth and goodness of the gospel message are accepted, there is no room left for one to reject the authority of the Christ of the gospel. And baptism rests upon this one thing—authority. Baptism is a part of the new birth by which one enters a new state of life. Thus the life is changed.

(Refer to lessons on "The New Birth" and "Baptism.")

Perfect obedience brings the approval of conscience. No one can have a clear conscience in disobedience.

NOTE.—The above facts constitute a condensation of the Bible teaching concerning the change of a soul from the darkness of sin to the light of salvation. The matter is lifted out of the realm of argument in order that it may be put upon a practical basis. The personal worker must make the object of his efforts *understand what it means to be changed* by the gospel message, so he will not longer wait for "that feeling" before accepting Christ.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. What has been the common notion concerning the change of heart?

2. What is the average inquirer now seeking in this connection?

3. What are the functions of the heart?

4. What does the Bible mean by using the word "heart"?

5. Is the change of heart miraculous?

6. Name the five facts concerning the change that takes place in conversion.

7. What is meant by a change of mind?

8. What is meant by a change of will?

9. What is meant by a change of state?

10. What will bring an approval of conscience?

Memory References.—1 Pet. 3:18-21; Acts 24:16; Heb. 10:22; Matt. 6:21; Rom. 8:6, 7.

LESSON XII.

THE GOSPEL.

LESSON TEXT.—"For I am not ashamed of the gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."—Rom. 1:16.

After Christ's resurrection he told his disciples to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation." The salvation of the race depends upon the gospel which these men preached. The soul-winner must know what this gospel is and be able to make its message clear to others. If Christ is the "author and finisher of our faith," it is a gratuitous reflection upon him for any would-be soul-winner to seek to save men by using anything else than the gospel. The church must learn to rely upon the power of the gospel if she would become the refuge for the wandering souls of men. The machinery of modern evangelism and the superficial sentimentalism used to bring multitudes to an immediate decision do not go God's length in the most important work on earth. Man must be brought *all the way home to Christ,* and only the gospel message will accomplish this end.

THE MEANING OF THE GOSPEL.

The word "gospel" means "glad tidings." To tell the gospel story means to bring the mind of the unsaved in touch with the "glad tidings" that "the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost."

Paul sums up the meaning of the gospel in the following:

"Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:1-4).

The death, burial and resurrection of Christ are the central truths of the gospel message. These truths were constantly kept before the people in the preaching of the early Christians. To hear these truths and believe them are essential to the salvation of the soul. The sufficient gospel message is contained in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Acts.

(Refer to lesson on "Special Soul-winning Books.")

"Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name" (John 20:30, 31).

When the soul-winner learns to use the gospel in his work for Christ, he will find it more interesting and satisfactory than any other message. Dying men desire a certain foundation for faith. The gospel furnishes a complete answer to that desire. The gospel consists of

1. Facts to be believed.
2. Commandments to be obeyed.
3. Promises to be appropriated.

THE FACTS.—These have been cited in 1 Cor. 15:1-4 and John 20:30, 31 above. Rom. 10:8-10 should be

studied in this connection. "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach: because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus Christ as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Thus by these Scriptures it will be seen that the chief facts of the gospel are the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

THE COMMANDMENTS.—At this point the personal worker must not confuse the commandments of Moses with the gospel of Christ. Too many think that they may be saved by living up to the Ten Commandments. These commandments are not a part of the gospel of Christ. The following Scriptures should be well understood, as they point out the differences between the law and the gospel: Gal. 3:23-29; Heb. 8:1-13; Acts 15:1-19.

The commandments of Christ are to be obeyed. (Refer to lesson on "The Terms of Pardon.")

THE PROMISES.—(For the meaning of these promises refer to lesson on "Salvation.") It must be made clear to the inquirer that he must believe the great facts of the gospel and obey the commandments of Christ if he would claim the promises of salvation and life. It is our business to make the gospel message clear and uncompromising. To start the inquirer in a compromising and indifferent fashion means to open his life to one long danger of compromise in matters of religion. We may exercise large liberty with that which is our own, but with reference to the "things that are God's" it is better to be *loyal* than *liberal,* for "He spoke as one having authority."

Hearing the Gospel.

The cases of conversion recorded in the Acts of the Apostles all show clearly that whoever would be saved must first *hear the gospel.* Peter preached to the people in Jerusalem, Philip preached in Samaria, Paul preached in Athens—all that men and women might *hear* the message. "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same Lord is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him: for, whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things. But they did not all hearken to the glad tidings. For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:12-17).

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. Upon what does the salvation of the world depend?
2. Why should we rely wholly upon the gospel to save men?
3. Why do modern methods fail to go God's length in winning souls to Christ?
4. What is the meaning of the word "gospel"?
5. What are the central truths of the gospel message?
6. Why were the Four Gospels written?
7. What are the facts of the gospel?

8. What is the difference between the law and the gospel?

9. Why must Christ be obeyed?

10. What are the gospel promises?

MEMORY REFERENCES.—Gal. 1:8; Mark 16:15-20; 1 Cor. 1:17; 2:2; 2 Tim. 4:1, 2; Isa. 55:9-11.

LESSON XIII.

THE TERMS OF PARDON.

LESSON TEXT.—"And being made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation."—Heb. 5:9.

"What must I do to be saved?" This is the most important question of life. Man is conscious of sin and constantly seeking a remedy for it. No one who is brought face to face with sin as a personal fact could long reject a clear light on the subject of salvation. Above everything else it is the business of the soul-winner to know the plan of salvation. He is reaching a point on this subject where a mistake is inexcusable. The seeker after salvation should be able to find it by making inquiry of any Christian. Whatever else in the Bible may be difficult to understand, the terms of pardon are made plain enough to all. The way of pardon in Christ Jesus is not a thing of darkness and mystery. The meridian sun is not brighter than the way of salvation. These facts pressed home to the heart of the inquirer will convince him of the beauty of God's method of pardon and make it worthy of acceptation in his heart.

THE GOSPEL TERMS.

1. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith is the first step in the direction of salvation. Indeed, faith is the first law of life in every field of human endeavor. The wonderful thing about God's plan is that he has

made its acceptation a reasonable matter. Whatever else we do is done by beginning on faith. So, when we ask the inquirer to believe on the Lord Jesus we are only making a request that is in harmony with everything else that he accepts in life. (Mark 5:36; John 3:16; Acts 2:44; 16:31; 18:8; Rom. 1:16.)

2. Repent. Turn from sin unto God. A saving faith in Christ will be accompanied by a sincere repentance. No time should be lost in making ancient arguments about repentance coming before faith, or vice versa. The necessary thing is that faith and repentance are both present and genuine. And the meaning of repentance must not be misunderstood. Many have been sorry for sin and yet did not repent. Sorrow for sin may not always lead to repentance, but real repentance will always be accompanied by a godly sorrow for sin. Repentance in the New Testament sense is a surrender of the stubborn will to the overtures of mercy and righteousness. This surrender must be complete and unconditional, and it must lead to a reformation in life. Repentance is a change of will that leads to a change of life. (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 17:30; Rom. 2:4; 2 Cor. 7:10.)

3. Confess Christ before men. Secret discipleship can never meet the demand of our Saviour. He must be confessed openly and before the world. Faith and repentance will lead one to the point where he will make a public declaration of his faith in the divinity of Jesus Christ. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." No half-way measures are worth while at this moment in the great change. A public confession of Christ is a courageous avowal of allegiance to him as the Son of God and the

Saviour of men. It is the most important step in life. The confession of Christ is a simple and beautiful method of bearing witness for him, and it may not be set aside for any substitute such as is sometimes used when people take a stand for Christ. It is not necessary to subscribe to creeds and catechisms, but it is absolutely necessary to confess Christ before men. (Matt. 10:32, 33; Luke 12:8, 9; Rom. 10:8-10; Phil. 2:9-11.)

4. Be baptized. This is the final step in the primary obedience to the commandments of Christ. Its essentiality is seen in the fact that Christ has authorized and commanded it. It is unnecessary for the soul-winner to try to give a theological dissertation on the design and action of baptism. Such a procedure can only prolong the inquirer's delay. Raise the one vital question, Is baptism commanded in the New Testament? If so, there is only one thing to do with a command of God. By urging this point to the utmost the diligent and conscientious inquirer will be compelled to make a final decision. (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3, 4; Col. 2:12.)

(Refer to lessons on "The Holy Spirit," "The New Birth," "The Change of Heart," "Baptism" and "The Christian Life.")

An Important Matter.

The soul-winner should show the inquirer that these steps constitute God's method of pardoning the past. Faith, repentance, confession and baptism do not insure eternal salvation, but they do bring the soul into communion with Christ and establish a new relationship between man and the Father in heaven. In this new relationship man has a mediator in the person of Jesus

Christ, through whom his sins may be confessed and pardoned. This new relationship is the Christian life, in which man is to continue until death.

"For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all; the testimony to be borne in its own times" (1 Tim. 2:5, 6).

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

Comparisons.

Comparisons are sometimes odious and dangerous, but the personal worker will often come in touch with people who will seek to argue in favor of some of the old methods of "getting religion." It is here that great tact and wisdom must be exercised in showing the difference between the true and the false. Firmly and patiently and prayerfully persist in seeking to show that this is God's way of pardoning the sinner. It may be a simple way, but why should God give anything else than a simple way? "He is not willing that any should perish," and therefore made his way so clear that all could understand (Isa. 35:8: Matt. 7:13, 14; 15:9).

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. What is the most important thing for the soul-winner to know?
2. Why must one believe in Christ?
3. Why is faith the first step in everything?
4. What accompanies a genuine faith?
5. To what does repentance lead?

6. Why must Christ be confessed publicly?
7. What is the meaning of the confession?
8. What is the final step in primary obedience?
9. Does primary obedience bring eternal salvation?
10. What does it mean to have Christ as mediator?

MEMORY REFERENCES.—Rev. 22:14; Matt. 10:22; Rom. 6:17; 15:18; Acts 6:7; Phil. 2:8.

LESSON XIV.

THE GOSPEL APPLIED—THE THREE THOUSAND.

LESSON TEXT.—"And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."—Acts 2:38.

The entire second chapter of Acts should be studied in connection with this subject. The chapter contains the account of the first complete gospel sermon after the death, burial, resurrection, ascension and coronation of Christ. It tells the story of the establishment of Christianity among men. It shows how the apostles were prepared for their work, how the gospel was preached and how it was accepted by many who heard. The record of this chapter sets a precedent for gospel workers and soul-winners in all subsequent ages. So far as we know, God has never changed the order of the gospel with its message of salvation in the name of Christ. The same gospel and the same obedience of Pentecost are in force to-day. The requirements of Peter at the close of this famous sermon ought to be in order at the close of the modern preacher's sermon. The very same thing that saved men and women nineteen hundred years ago will save them to-day.

THE CHAPTER OUTLINED.

1. The preparation of the apostles (1-4).
2. The effect of this miracle upon the Jews (5-13).

3. The false charge refuted (14-21).
4. The sermon preached by Peter (22-36).
5. The momentous question (37).
6. The apostle's answer (38).
7. The exhortation (39, 40).
8. Acceptation of the message (41).
9. The continuation of faith (42-45).
10. The new-found joy in Christ (46, 47).

It is well for the soul-winner to get this outline well fixed in the mind, so that he may relate the incidents of the conversion of the three thousand in orderly fashion. The inquirer who desires to cover the ground thoroughly must be shown that perfect harmony is to be found in the various accounts of conversion recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.

The Important Facts.

In this account of the conversion of the three thousand the following facts should be pointed out:

1. The preacher was prepared for his message.
2. The gospel was preached to the multitude.
3. The Lordship of Jesus Christ was emphasized.
4. The people were pricked in their heart.
5. They asked what to do.
6. They were given a plain and positive answer.
7. They accepted the answer.
8. They remained faithful in the fellowship of the saints.
9. The believers were together in a common cause.
10. They were happy in Christ.
11. Their faithfulness had a salutary effect upon the people.

If the soul-winner is familiar with this chapter, he will be able to make these facts very clear to the mind

of even the most superficial Bible student. It must be shown that there was nothing mysterious about the manner in which the three thousand in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost accepted the gospel. It was preached to them, and they believed and accepted it in obedience to the apostle's admonition. This is true of every conversion recorded in the New Testament.

The Particular Points.

1. At the close of the sermon which these people heard they were "pricked in their heart." We know that "faith comes by hearing the word of God," so we naturally conclude that these people believed what they heard because "they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do?"

2. In answer to this question, Peter told them to "repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of sins," promising them that they would "receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

3. Then we learn that "about three thousand souls," on this day, "received his word" and "were baptized."

4. So the particular points in this lesson are in harmony with the terms of pardon given in the lesson on that subject. The points to be emphasized are these:

(1) They heard the Word.
(2) They believed.
(3) They repented.
(4) They were baptized.

(Refer to lesson on "The Terms of Pardon.")

5. Observe that they were told to "repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ *unto the remission of sins.*" This would seem to settle all questions concerning the design of repentance and baptism. Both

are commanded in this connection "unto the remission of sins." Since God was pleased to join them in Peter's answer to the people on Pentecost, there can be no reason for seeking to separate them to-day. There is one safe side to repentance—repent. There is one safe side to baptism—be baptized. Obedience is better than argument, and the satisfaction of knowing that we have done our best to do God's will is of more importance than a knowledge of the many arguments used to escape the simple statements of the Bible. "To obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken is better than the fat of rams."

6. After these three thousand had "received the word" we learn that "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship"; they continued to pray, and they gave of their goods as it was necessary to meet the needs of their fellows; they were of one heart; they praised God and had "favor with all the people." All of these things follow the acceptation of Christ as naturally as the day follows the rising of the sun. This group of believers constituted the world's first model church.

(Refer to lesson on "The Church.")

Questions for the Inquirer.

1. Is this not a simple lesson for us?
2. Is it not true that you understand it perfectly?
3. Is there any excuse on account of mystery in this connection?
4. Did Peter give a fair and complete answer to his inquirers?
5. Should the same answer be given to the same question to-day?

Press these questions after the chapter has been discussed with the inquirer.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. What does the second chapter of Acts contain?
2. Has God changed his gospel since Peter's sermon?
3. Give an outline of the chapter.
4. Name the important facts in the chapter.
5. Why did the people question Peter at the close of his sermon?
6. What was his answer?
7. Why should that answer be given to-day?
8. What four things did the people do?
9. What is the design of repentance and baptism?
10. What did the three thousand do after baptism?

Memory References.—Luke 24:46, 47; Acts 1:8; Matt. 16:19; John 20:22, 23; Eph. 4:1-7.

LESSON XV.

THE GOSPEL APPLIED—THE SAMARITANS.

LESSON TEXT.—"But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."—Acts 8:12.

Scripture Lesson—Acts 8:1-25. In studying this lesson it should be remembered that the people who accepted Christ on the day of Pentecost were Jews. According to history and tradition, the Jews despised the Samaritans. The woman of Samaria said as much to Christ. "The Samaritan woman therefore saith unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a Samaritan woman? (for Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans)" (John 4:9). Now we are to see that the Jewish disciples of Christ went down to preach the gospel to the Samaritans. The gospel of Christ brings men to understand their relation to each other and reveals unto them the mighty fact that God has one common method of bringing salvation to every family and tribe in every age. All men are alike under the conditions of the gospel. No man is excused and no man is refused on account of his nationality. "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him" (Acts 1:34, 35). It took a special revelation of God's will to convince Peter of this truth, and that revelation, as we have it, should convince any one else; rightly understood, it will.

The Lesson Outlined.

1. The persecution against the church at Jerusalem (1-3).

2. The scattered disciples preached the Word everywhere (4).

3. Philip preached in Samaria and brought joy to the city (5-8).

4. The people had been deceived by Simon (9-11).

5. When they believed Philip they were baptized (12).

6. Then Simon himself believed and was baptized (13).

7. The apostles at Jerusalem sent Peter and John to Samaria to impart the Holy Spirit unto them (14-17).

8. Simon, desiring the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit for selfish purposes, is rebuked by Peter and told to repent and pray to God for pardon (18-23).

9. Simon asks Peter to pray for him (24).

10. Returning to Jerusalem, the apostles preached in many of the Samaritan villages (25).

The soul-winner should seek to keep the simple facts of the conversions in systematic order. By having an outline of this sort he is prepared to know instantly just how to meet every question of the inquirer. It is essential that one should know the points that might bother the inquirer and be prepared to explain them promptly and consistently.

The Important Facts.

In this account of the conversion of the Samaritans the following facts will give the inquirer a sufficient understanding of how they were brought to Christ:

1. Philip preached Christ to them.

2. Philip performed miracles in the city.
3. They believed what Philip preached.
4. They were baptized.
5. Even Simon, who had deceived them, believed and was baptized.

These are the facts intimately associated with the acceptation of Christ by the Samaritans and also by Simon, their former leader, whom they had called "the great power of God." Here, again, we are shown that there was nothing mysterious in the manner of accepting Christ. Christ was preached to them, and they believed and accepted the preacher's message. And we are to show that their greatest man was compelled to obey Christ in precisely the same way that all others obeyed him. Simon's former greatness could avail nothing in the presence of the living Christ as preached by a faithful preacher.

The Particular Points.

1. Since Philip preached Christ unto them and they believed in his message we have proof again that "faith comes by hearing the word of God."

2. It is not too much to assume that Philip commanded them to be baptized, because we are told that "they were baptized, both men and women." At any rate, we have the following truths very plainly stated:

(1) They heard the gospel.
(2) They believed what they heard.
(3) They were baptized.

3. It is not stated in so many words that these people repented, but we know that their baptism could not have been genuine without repentance. In the lesson on the conversions at Pentecost we find repentance and baptism linked together in obedience to Christ. In this

lesson we find belief and baptism joined in the obedience of the Samaritans. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that belief, repentance and baptism are all essential to obedience. It is only by putting together the several accounts of conversion that we may reach an intelligent conclusion as to our full duty in the matter of obeying Christ.

(Refer to lessons on "The Holy Spirit" and "Divine Healing" for any questions that may arise concerning the apostles laying on their hands to impart the Holy Spirit.)

The Sin of Simon.

When Simon saw that by "laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me this power, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit." He is given to understand that the gift of God may not be purchased with money. No doubt Simon thought he would gain wealth and greater fame than he had hitherto enjoyed if he could come into possession of this wonderful power. Here is a man who has believed in Christ and been baptized into him, committing a sin almost immediately after his first obedience to Christ. The incident is given to show how a baptized believer may be pardoned if he sins against God. Peter rebuked Simon for his sin, and said: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee." The terms of pardon for the baptized believer are *repentance* and *prayer*. And prayer is the special privilege of the child of God. The New Testament does not intimate that the man outside of Christ may pray for, and expect pardon through prayer. Neither does God require the

baptized believer to be baptized again. Each truth of God must be made to stand in its proper place. Some things are unlawful for the man out of Christ, but no good thing will be denied the child of God who goes to him in penitence and prayer.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. What was the relation of Jew and Samaritan?
2. What does the gospel do for the various nations?
3. On what conditions are men acceptable unto God?
4. Give an outline of the lesson.
5. Who was Simon of Samaria?
6. How did the Samaritans accept Christ?
7. What part did Philip have in their salvation?
8. What are the particular points in the lesson?
9. Compare the obedience of the three thousand on Pentecost with that of the Samaritans.
10. What was the sin of Simon?
11. Why did he desire miraculous power?
12. On what terms may a baptized believer be pardoned if he sin against God?
13. May the man out of Christ pray for pardon?
14. Why is one baptism sufficient?

Memory References.—Rom. 8:26; 1 Thess. 5:17; 1 Pet. 4:7; Eph. 6:18; Jas. 5:15, 16.

LESSON XVI.

THE GOSPEL APPLIED—THE MAN OF ETHIOPIA.

LESSON TEXT.—"And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus." —Acts 8:35.

Scripture Lesson—Acts 8:26-40. This lesson gives a record of the conversion of a man of great authority, and it shows that God deals with an individual very much as he deals with thousands. There is one law of pardon for all men. No position, however exalted, can excuse a man from obedience to Christ. This man of Ethiopia, though a potentate of great authority, gladly paid the homage of his heart to the higher authority of Jesus Christ. And his salvation was brought about in the same lowly manner that characterized every other conversion of New Testament times. God made no exception of him because he was the treasurer of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. He heard the gospel and obeyed it just as thousands before him had done. A strict adherence to the record of this man's conversion would transform the church usage of to-day. It clearly reveals that man may obey his God along the lonely roadway, without the formalities that usually take place when one becomes a member of a modern church. We are made to realize more clearly that God is a spirit and that wherever penitent souls seek him there will he be found. God is no respecter of persons, but men of all nations find him when they seek aright.

The Lesson Outlined.

1. The preacher is sent by an angel of God (26).
2. He beholds the man of Ethiopia reading the Bible (27, 28).
3. The Spirit directs him to the chariot (29).
4. He asks the man of Ethiopia if he understands what he reads (30).
5. The man of Ethiopia invites Philip to ride with him (31).
6. He continues his reading and Philip preaches to him (32-35).
7. He confesses Christ and is baptized (36-40).

Nothing is more convincing to the candid mind than a fair and intelligent method of getting at the meaning of any portion of Scripture. This particular account is given in such clearness and detail that it is almost a photograph of obedience to Christ. It leaves the inquirer absolutely without a refuge save in Christ. The way here is too plain to be misunderstood and misapplied.

The Important Facts.

The outstanding characteristics of this lesson may be summed up as follows:

1. The angel of the Lord helped with the eunuch's conversion.
2. Reading the Bible had a part in his conversion.
3. The Spirit had a part in his conversion.
4. The preacher was present and Christ was preached.
5. The eunuch confessed Christ.
6. He was baptized immediately.
7. After his baptism he rejoiced in his salvation.

In going over these lessons with the inquirer it is well for the soul-winner to point out the facts by degrees and thus lead on to an understanding of all doubtful or mooted questions. The Ethiopian's conversion furnishes an opportunity for settling some points in such a way that the old methods of "getting religion" will be discarded forever by the inquirer. Here he is given a lesson on the subject of baptism that will settle the question forever if he is willing to take God at his word.

The Particular Points.

1. The angel was simply a messenger to bring the preacher and the man to be saved together. In this case the angel appeared to the preacher. In the case of Cornelius the angel appeared to the man to be saved. The purpose of the angel's appearance in each case was the same. Man must hear the gospel preached.

2. The man of Ethiopia was reading the Bible. The odds are in favor of the man who reads God's word. The Spirit directed Philip to go near the chariot, and in doing so he heard the eunuch read, and said, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" It is important to understand what one reads, particularly in matters of religion.

3. He was reading a remarkable prophecy from Isaiah, and Philip took this prophecy as a beginning for a sermon on Christ. "He preached unto him Jesus." Here, again, we have an illustration of the fact that "faith comes by hearing the word of God."

4. As they passed along they came to a certain water, and the man of Ethiopia demanded baptism of Philip. It does not say that Philip preached baptism, but the preaching of Christ as he is revealed in Matthew,

Mark, Luke and John would not be complete without giving baptism the place assigned to it by the Gospel writers.

5. Philip told him he could be baptized if he believed what had been preached. Then the man of Ethiopia confessed Christ as the Son of God. (Verse 37 is not in our latest version of the Bible, but it is found in most of the ancient versions and manuscripts. This is sufficient proof that it is not out of order in the conversion of man.)

6. His baptism then took place. A few facts concerning this baptism are noteworthy:

(1) It took place in the water.
(2) They both went down into the water.
(3) They both came up out of the water.
(4) The man rejoiced after his baptism.

(Refer to second lesson on "Baptism.")

7. Thus the particular points in this lesson are in harmony with the general idea of conversion as revealed in the New Testament. They may be emphasized as follows:

(1) The man of Ethiopia heard the Word.
(2) He believed.
(3) He confessed Christ.
(4) He was baptized.

8. Here, as in the case of the Samaritans, nothing is said of repentance, but we know that it is safe to assume that repentance took place. At Pentecost we find repentance and baptism linked together; at Samaria belief and baptism are expressly stated; in the conversion of the man of Ethiopia we find belief, confession and baptism expressly mentioned. By joining these accounts we find the New Testament gives belief, repentance, confession and baptism as God's plan for bringing

men to the pardon which he has offered in Christ Jesus.

LESSON REVIEW FROM MEMORY.

1. How would this Scripture transform modern churches?
2. What part did the angel have in this conversion?
3. Why was this man reading the Bible?
4. What did the Spirit do in this conversion?
5. Why did Philip preach Christ to the Ethiopian?
6. Why did the eunuch demand baptism?
7. What was required before his baptism?
8. Give the particulars of this baptism?
9. What happened after the baptism of the eunuch?
10. Compare this account with the conversions at Pentecost and Samaria.

MEMORY REFERENCES.—1 Tim. 6:13; John 11:27; Matt. 1:21; 27:37; Acts 9:20; 19:4; 28:31.

LESSON XVII.

THE GOSPEL APPLIED—SAUL OF TARSUS.

LESSON TEXT.—"And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name."—Acts 22:16.

Scripture Lesson—Acts 9:1-22. Saul of Tarsus was Christianity's most conspicuous convert. His conversion was the greatest individual victory ever won by the power of the gospel. In this lesson God might have left a record of some special dispensation by which great men are to be saved. But no record of this sort appears in the Bible. "And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." This leaves no room for any one to expect special favors on account of greatness, position or wealth. The salvation offered in Christ is offered to all men on equal terms. Saul was called to be an apostle, but this special call did not excuse him from obeying the gospel terms of pardon. The soul-winner frequently discovers people who talk favorably of Christianity, but at the same time they seem to expect to be made church-members in some half-way fashion. The conversion of Saul may be cited to show that even the very greatest may expect nothing from God in disobedience. And the great Saul did not expect salvation thus: he gladly obeyed Christ when the way was made clear to him. And having thus learned the way, he was qualified to reveal it to others, which he at once proceeded to do.

The Lesson Outlined.

1. Saul as Christ's enemy seeks to destroy his followers (1, 2).

2. Nearing Damascus, Christ appears to him in a vision (3, 4).

3. Saul is told to go into the city to learn his duty (5, 6).

4. Saul's companions were rendered speechless (7).

5. Saul was led to Damascus, where he fasted in blindness for three days (8, 9).

6. Ananias is called in a vision and commanded to visit Saul (10-16).

7. Ananias visits Saul and speaks to him of Christ (17).

8. Saul is baptized and breaks his fast (18, 19).

9. He spends a few days with the disciples, and then preaches Christ among the Jews in the synagogues (19, 20).

10. He amazes with his preaching that proves the Christ (21, 22).

This outline will give the soul-winner a working knowledge of the contents of the chapter on Saul's conversion. A number of difficulties will disappear by reading the twenty-second chapter of Acts in this connection. It is manifestly impossible for the worker to meet the demands of soul-winning without having in mind an accurate and orderly arrangement of the several conversion records. It is by these records that he must bring the inquirer to a decision in favor of meeting God's requirements in God's way, and by no other means —arguments, emotional appeals—the narration of striking incidents—may he hope to do it.

The Important Facts.

The leading facts in this lesson are as follows:

1. Saul was an avowed enemy of Christ.
2. Christ appeared to him in person.
3. Christ commanded him to go to Damascus for instructions as to duty.
4. He fasted and prayed for three days.
5. God sent Ananias to interview Saul.
6. By a miracle Saul's sight is restored.
7. Saul was baptized immediately.
8. He then received meat and was strengthened.
9. He became a preacher of the gospel.

These facts reduce the lesson to that simple and intelligent form which every conversion record takes when no effort is made to read between the lines of Scripture. It is not necessary to read anything into this record in order to learn the whole story of how this greatest enemy of Christ became his best friend. The sure way to get right with God is to take him at his word.

The Particular Points.

1. Saul's hatred of Christ did not destroy Christ's love for him. He had a work for Saul to do and therefore called him to the work. Christ's appearance to Saul was a miraculous occurrence, but it must be observed that the appearance was not to save Saul; it was to call him to his special work (Acts 26: 15-18).

2. Christ did not tell Saul what to do to be saved: he told him to go into the city to learn what he "must do." Even the Lord of glory did not change or suspend the law of pardon. Saul must be brought to Christ through a human agency.

3. Ananias was called "a certain disciple." There is nothing to indicate that he was exalted above his fellows in the church. He furnishes us an example of how every church-member ought to be a soul-winner. He shows us, too, that an ordinary disciple may assist even great men in their salvation. The human element was strong in Ananias because he feared to visit Saul.

4. Ananias obeyed the Lord, who told him that he would find Saul praying. Here Ananias might have left a precedent on the subject of praying for salvation. But he did not instruct Saul to continue in prayer with the expectation that his sins would thereby be forgiven. Instead of this, he put his hands on Saul, restored his sight and commanded him to be baptized at once.

5. Saul was baptized forthwith. He then received something to eat and began to recover from the three days of fasting. After a few days with the disciples at Damascus he started his wonderful career of preaching Christ.

6. Nothing is said in the lesson about faith and repentance being required of Saul. In the words of the lesson text, Ananias tells him to be baptized, "calling on his [the Lord's] name." The fact that Saul had gone three days without eating and drinking is an indication of his mental state, particularly when it is coupled with the fact that he was praying. Only a penitent believer could continue in prayer. The absence of a direct mention of faith and repentance in this instance never causes anybody to argue that these things are not essential. The fact that baptism is mentioned puts that subject entirely out of the realm of speculation.

7. Thus in the completed conversion records we find that baptism is the last act before man finds peace and comfort and begins to do the work of the Lord.

8. This record is in strict harmony with all others in the New Testament. God does not require a thing of one man in conversion and then suspend it in the conversion of another. He always takes man where he finds him and points out the way to safety and pardon. Whoever would find contentment of soul must find it in perfect obedience to the commandments of Christ.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. How are great men saved?
2. On what terms is salvation offered to all men?
3. What was Saul's chief characteristic before meeting Christ?
4. What takes place between Christ and Saul?
5. What takes place between God and Ananias?
6. What takes place between Ananias and Saul?
7. Why did not Christ tell Saul what to do to be saved?
8. Why did Christ appear to Saul?
9. Why was Saul fasting and praying?
10. Why did Ananias fail to tell Saul to continue in prayer?
11. Why is no mention made of faith and repentance?
12. In what relation does baptism stand in our work for Christ and the church?
13. What was Saul's chief characteristic after his baptism?

Memory References.—Acts 8:1; Gal. 1:15-17; 2 Tim. 1:12; 2:19; Tit. 1:16; Phil. 2:1; Heb. 12:1, 2.

LESSON XVIII.

THE GOSPEL APPLIED—CORNELIUS.

LESSON TEXT.—"Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord."—Acts 10:33.

The complete tenth chapter of Acts should be read carefully in connection with this lesson. It is the record of the salvation of a thoroughly good man. It would appear that even goodness alone can never save any man. We are never to forget that Christ must be given his rightful place in the conversion of the whole race. God has not made an exception of anybody in his arrangement for the salvation of mankind. This lesson may be applied with telling effect to the argument of the man who thinks he can be saved because he lives a good life. This class of men gives much time to answering the appeals of Christianity with declarations of their self-righteousness. Persuade one of this sort to examine candidly the record of the conversion of Cornelius and he will be compelled to admit that the New Testament required even a good man to obey Christ. The lesson text indicates the spirit that ought to be shown by every one who would find favor with God. Christ said: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." This declaration must not be taken to mean that any man can be righteous enough to be saved out of Christ. Perfect righteousness is not found outside of Christ. It means rather that only the sinner who feels his need is ready to be saved.

The Lesson Outlined.

1. The good man is introduced (1, 2).

2. He is visited by an angel of God and told to send for Peter (3-6).

3. Cornelius sends to Joppa (7, 8).

4. Peter has a vision (9-16).

5. While Peter thinks on the vision, the messengers from Cornelius arrive (17-20).

6. The messengers tell the purpose of their visit (21, 22).

7. They are entertained for the night, and Peter and his companions (Acts 11:12) accompany them (23).

8. Cornelius and friends await Peter (24).

9. He worships Peter, but is rebuked for it (25, 26).

10. Peter addresses the assembly (27-29).

11. Cornelius tells why he sent for Peter and signifies his willingness to obey God (30-33).

12. Peter preaches Christ to them (34-43).

13. The Holy Spirit is given and the Gentiles speak with tongues (44-46).

14. Peter commands them to be baptized (47, 48).

The fact that this is a long chapter, devoted to the conversion of one good man, should make the personal worker all the more eager to master its contents. Acts 11:1-18 should be read because it makes clearer some of the things in the lesson proper. The question between Jew and Gentile is forever settled in the conversion of Cornelius and in the attitude of the church as shown in Acts 11:17, 18, when the saints learned from Peter's lips the story of the whole matter. Henceforth God has no favored nation; "there is no difference, all have sinned."

The Important Facts.

1. Cornelius is praying.
2. He is instructed to send for Peter.
3. Peter has a vision, but does not know its meaning.
4. The Spirit directs Peter to go down.
5. He goes with the men to Cornelius.
6. Cornelius has prepared for him.
7. Peter preaches Christ.
8. The miraculous gift of the Spirit is bestowed upon Cornelius and his friends.
9. They are commanded to be baptized.
10. Peter is invited to remain.

The whole chapter is clustered about these few facts. Notwithstanding the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit, it must be shown that there was nothing unusual, after all, in the manner in which Cornelius accepted Christ. His conversion was normal and in every way congenial to the other conversions of the New Testament.

The Particular Points.

1. The Bible says more good things about Cornelius than it does concerning any other man except Christ. He was a devout, God-fearing philanthropist, who believed in God and prayed to him constantly. But he was not satisfied; he desired more light. Hence the angel's visit.

2. The angel appeared to bring Cornelius and Peter together so that God's plan might be carried out. (Refer to article *one* under same heading in lesson on "The Man of Ethiopia.") The angel found Cornelius praying, but did not direct him to continue in prayer. There was

something else to be done. (Refer to article *four* under same heading in lesson on "Saul of Tarsus.")

3. Cornelius obeyed the angel at once. He sent for Peter as soon as the angel departed. The prompt obedience of the New Testament converts ought to be marked by men to-day.

4. God gave Peter a vision to convince him that all men are acceptable unto him. Peter later acknowledged the meaning of the vision.

5. Cornelius asserted his humanity in starting to worship Peter, but Peter's admonition brought him to understand his mistake. No man should worship his fellows, however high they may be exalted in the church.

6. Cornelius showed a willingness that ought to be imitated by all inquirers when he said, "Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God, to learn all things that have been commanded thee of God." Such a spirit will always lead to perfect obedience.

7. Peter then preached a sermon to Cornelius and his friends. Here, again, the gospel message was heard. Observe carefully Acts 11:13, 14. Cornelius and his house were to be "saved by words."

8. While Peter was preaching, the Holy Spirit fell on the house of Cornelius and they "spake with tongues and magnified God." The friends of Peter were astonished at this, and their astonishment seems to be the very end which God had in mind in giving the miraculous power to the Gentiles.

(See lessons on "Holy Spirit" and "Divine Healing.")

9. Then Peter raised a question as to the right of any one to forbid water, and "commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." Here baptism is expressly *called* a commandment of the Lord. This should settle every argument about baptism.

10. We are not told in so many words that Cornelius and his friends believed. We do know, however, that they "heard the word." Peter had told them, as he closed his sermon on Christ, that "through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins." We know that "faith comes by hearing the word." They heard and were baptized, and it is reasonable to say that they believed. Repentance is not mentioned, but no one thinks of calling it in question. Baptism is mentioned, and should therefore be given its proper place and meaning. Now we observe that Cornelius and his friends

(1) "Heard the word."

(2) Received baptism as commanded.

This puts the conversion of this Gentile household on the same basis with all other conversions, and shows that a good man is saved in Christ just as others are.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. What distinguished Cornelius from others?
2. On what class may this chapter be used with telling effect?
3. Give an outline of the chapter.
4. What was the meaning of Peter's vision?
5. Why did Cornelius worship Peter?
6. Why did Peter preach to Cornelius?
7. What was the result of his preaching?
8. Why is water mentioned?
9. Tell of Peter's visit to Jerusalem following the conversion of the house of Cornelius.
10. What was the difference between the Jews and Gentiles?

Memory References.—Rev. 22:8, 9; Acts 18:8; 1 Cor. 1:11-18; 3:10; Rom. 1:5.

LESSON XIX.

THE GOSPEL APPLIED—THE JAILER.

LESSON TEXT.—"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house."—Acts 16:31.

Scripture Lesson—Acts 16:23-34. This is the sixth and last lesson on "The Gospel Applied." These six records are in perfect harmony. What is omitted from one is supplied in another, until the careful student is enabled to trace his own salvation in the one method used to save men in the days of the apostles. The jailer of Philippi is a fine example of how promptly a man in desperate straits will obey the commandments of God. "The same hour of the night" he obeyed God. It was his first hearing of the message too. The events that led up to his conversion were very unusual, but the manner of the conversion was not changed on this account. Paul and Silas followed the usual plan of bringing the man to a knowledge of salvation in Christ. However unusual the circumstances surrounding man, there is only one sure way of receiving assurance of salvation and adoption. The certain way of life is in taking God at his word.

THE LESSON OUTLINED.

1. Paul and Silas are delivered to the jailer for imprisonment (23).

2. To be sure of them, they are put in stocks in the inner prison (24).

3. They pray and sing hymns at midnight (25).

4. An earthquake releases every prisoner (26).

5. The jailer, ready to commit suicide, is stopped by Paul (27, 28).

6. The jailer then asks what to do to be saved (29, 30).

7. He is told to believe on the Lord Jesus, and the word of the Lord is preached unto him and his household (31, 32).

8. He washes the stripes of Paul and Silas and is baptized, he and his household, immediately (33).

9. He invites them into his house, gives them food and rejoices with his house, having believed in God (34).

This outline gives us a grasp on the history of the jailer's conversion, and brings forth the few characteristics that make this record worthy of the inquirer's attention. To get the full meaning of any of these records no item must be left out. The inquirer must not be permitted to overlook the things in this conversion that are found in the others. It is necessary at this time to point out the one general plan running through the six conversion records that have been studied.

The Important Facts.

1. God's children can sing and worship even in the midst of persecution.

2. God remembers his saints, for an earthquake is sent to release them.

3. The jailer, in very great fear, is on the brink of self-destruction.

4. "What must I do to be saved?" is his all-important question.

5. He is told to believe, but the disciples proceed at

once to preach the word of God to him in order that he may believe.

6. He takes them and washes their stripes.

7. He and his family receive baptism.

8. He rejoices in his salvation.

9. He believes in God.

In going over these facts, show the difference between a sinner, frightened even unto the very point of a self-inflicted death, and a saved man rejoicing in salvation. Show the simple plan by which he passes from death unto life. No matter how deep God goes to reach a man he always offers deliverance by the power of the gospel on the terms mentioned in the Great Commission.

The Particular Points.

1. In answer to the jailer's question, "What must I do to be saved?" he was told to "believe on the Lord Jesus." This says nothing of faith alone, although it is frequently quoted as proving the doctrine of salvation by faith only. An intelligent question here would be, "What does it mean to believe in Christ?" To believe in Christ means to believe what the Bible says about him. To believe in Christ means to take him at his word. One can never expect salvation who does not believe in Christ enough to obey him.

2. "How shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard?" So the next passage says that "they spake the word of the Lord unto him." He had not heard of Christ before, but now he has a preacher to tell him of Christ. Thus his faith came to him by "hearing the word" just as others must receive faith.

3. His immediate baptism should be a rebuke to many who delay this important obligation. Attention should be called to the fact that "he took them [Paul

and Silas], and washed their stripes, and was baptized." He "took them" somewhere. Evidently he took them out of the jail, because he "brought them up into his house" after the baptism. It is geographically accurate to say that Philippi was on a river. The thirteenth verse of this chapter speaks of the stream. We naturally associate this river with the jailer's baptism.

4. The rejoicing in this record follows the baptism. This is reasonable and suggestive. Baptism means just what the Bible defines it to mean, and whoever takes God at his word has cause for rejoicing after baptism.

5. To sum up this record, we find it showing that the jailer at Philippi followed the same law of pardon that was followed by all others—by the three thousand, the Samaritans, the man at Ethiopia, Saul of Tarsus and Cornelius. He

(1) Heard the word.
(2) Believed in the Lord Jesus.
(3) Was baptized immediately.
(4) Rejoiced in his salvation.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. Why are the Bible records of conversion harmonious?
2. What is the one sure way of salvation?
3. Why was the jailer about to commit suicide?
4. What question did he ask?
5. What does it mean to believe on the Lord Jesus?
6. What relation does preaching bear to faith?
7. Why was the jailer baptized immediately?
8. What does the rejoicing signify?
9. Give the outline of the lesson.

Memory References.—Phil. 2:12; Jas. 2:26; Acts 6:7; Rom. 4:13; 5:19-21; 6:11, 12.

LESSON XX.

BAPTISM—1. IS IT NECESSARY?

LESSON TEXT.—"And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."—Acts 10:48.

Two lessons are given on this subject in order to cover the ground within reasonable lesson limits. The usual arguments against baptism are met with book, chapter and verse of Scripture.

THE REASONS.

1. Only men say that baptism is not necessary. The Bible does not hint such a thought concerning it. "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

2. Baptism is positively commanded in the Bible. This should forever settle the question. "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you" (Acts 2:38). "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 10:48).

3. If we love Jesus, we will keep his commandments. "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

4. To be on terms of friendship with Jesus, we must keep his commandments. "Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you" (John 15:14).

5. We know Jesus by keeping his commandments. "And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:3, 4).

6. Baptism is authorized by Jesus Christ. No man should question his authority. "And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:18, 19).

7. We should submit to this authority, because Jesus Christ never changes. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day, yea and for ever" (Heb. 13:8).

8. Baptism is an act to be performed "in the name of Jesus Christ." "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 2:38).

9. To be loyal to Jesus, we must do whatever we are asked to do "in his name." "And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

10. Jesus, who authorized baptism, submitted to it himself. "Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan" (Mark 1:9).

11. He is our example. We should follow him in baptism as well as in other things. "For hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1 Pet. 2:21).

12. Jesus said: "It becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." If he said this concerning his own baptism, we should not excuse ourselves from it. "But John would have hindered him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? But Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3:14, 15).

13. God said he was well pleased with Jesus after

his baptism. "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him; and lo, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:16, 17).

14. To have God well pleased with us, we must have the spirit of Christ in us. He submitted to baptism. We must also submit to it. "If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9).

15. The first converts to Christianity were baptized. Why should not all others be? Did God require more of them than he does of us? "They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls" (Acts 2: 41).

16. When these same people cried out, "What shall we do?" Peter told them to "repent, and be baptized." If repentance is necessary, on what ground can we make baptism unnecessary? "Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:37, 38).

17. Paul, the chosen vessel to the Gentiles and author of thirteen or fourteen New Testament Epistles, was baptized before he entered God's service. "And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were scales, . . . and he arose and was baptized" (Acts 9:18).

18. Cornelius was a devout, God-fearing, praying, benevolent man (Acts 10:1-6), and yet Peter commanded him and his friends to be baptized. "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 10:48).

19. The first converts to Christianity were baptized; Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was baptized; Paul, the chosen vessel to the Gentiles, was baptized; Cornelius, a perfect example of morality, was baptized. Is God a respecter of persons to the extent that we can please him without baptism? "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34).

20. We should be baptized, because Jesus puts salvation after baptism. No man has any right to invert this order. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

21. Baptism is necessary, because Peter puts remission of sins after baptism. Baptism leads us "unto the remission of sins." To change Peter's order would mean to question his knowledge concerning the design of baptism.

"Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

22. Paul, relating the account of his conversion, shows that Ananias connects baptism with the washing away of sins. Let no man disconnect them. Certainly Ananias was posted on baptism. "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name" (Acts 22:16).

23. We should be baptized, because it is a solemn ordinance taking us into the death of Christ. "Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (Rom. 6:3).

24. Following in order with our death to sin and our baptism into Christ's death (Rom 6:1-3), Paul puts walking in newness of life. If we change Paul's

order, we lose the deep and spiritual import of baptism. "We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of his Father, so we also might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

25. We should be baptized, because Peter speaks of baptism as saving us. He also speaks of it as an "interrogation of a good conscience toward God." To be on the safe side and to have a clear conscience in the matter, it becometh us to fulfill the command to be baptized as well as any other. There has been much dispute over 1 Pet. 3:21, but the best way to settle all dispute is to be baptized. "Which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not putting away the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 3:21).

26. We should be baptized, because Paul says we put on Christ in baptism. We should not try to put him on any other way. "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27).

27. Baptism is necessary, because we enter the church, or body of Christ, through it. We should not try to enter the church any other way. "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body" (1 Cor. 12:13).

28. It is necessary to be baptized, because man can not enter the kingdom of God unless he is baptized. All are agreed that baptism is meant in the Scripture here given. "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

29. We should be baptized, because the gift of the Holy Spirit is promised in connection with baptism.

To obtain this gift, we should be obedient to the conditions of the Bible, because God never promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to any one in disobedience. "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

30. Baptism is only one of many commands that God has given in his word. Man can not in safety neglect one of God's commands. All of God's laws are the same, so far as obedience goes. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all" (Jas. 2:10).

31. To deny the necessity of baptism is equivalent to making grievous a command of God. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3).

32. We should be baptized, because rejoicing uniformly follows baptism in the New Testament records of conversion. This shows that baptism has a place in man's conversion.

(1) When the people heard Peter on Pentecost, they were "pricked in their heart" (Acts 2:38); after they were baptized, they rejoiced (Acts 2:41-47).

(2) Before Saul's baptism, he fasted (Acts 9:9); immediately after he took food (Acts 9:19).

(3) Before the man of Ethiopia was baptized, he was seeking knowledge (Acts 8:34); after his baptism he rejoiced (Acts 8:39).

(4) The Philippian jailer was about to commit suicide before the word of God was spoken to him (Acts 16:27); after his baptism he rejoiced (Acts 16:34).

The conclusion of the matter is that the rejoicing in these cases was brought about by the great truth that "remission of sins" was promised in connection with baptism. Who would not rejoice to have the assurance of forgiveness from past sins on such reasonable terms as are set forth in these various cases? In each instance above mentioned it will be seen that faith, repentance and baptism each had a part; but the rejoicing came after the baptism. The reason is obvious. Baptism is the last step of the sinner's entering into Christ. He goes into baptism to bury the old life, and comes out of the baptismal waters to "walk in newness of life." Then, if "faithful unto death," he will receive "a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

Nothing is more clearly taught in the Bible than that baptism is necessary. Paul says: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). How did we put on Christ? In baptism. Is the man who has not put on Christ occupying a position of safety? No believer of the gospel will say that it is safe to live out of Christ. If we put on Christ in baptism, and if it is unsafe to be out of Christ, it follows, then, that to be safe we must be "baptized into Christ." The safe side of baptism is the one on which a man may stand and say, "I have been baptized."

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. Why is obedience necessary?
2. Who authorized baptism?
3. Give reasons for being baptized.
4. Why does rejoicing follow baptism?
5. What does it mean to be on the safe side?

Memory References.—John 7:17; Matt. 6:33; 7:28, 29; 16:24; 17:5; Acts 18:24-28.

LESSON XXI.

BAPTISM—2. THE FORM.

LESSON TEXT.—"But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered."—Rom. 6:17.

This second lesson on baptism examines briefly the several records in the Bible where anything is said indicating the manner in which people were baptized during the days of John the Baptist, Jesus Christ and his apostles. The inquirer should be asked to believe and accept only what seems to be clearly taught in the Bible concerning the subject in question. The records are examined in regular order below.

I. THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW.

1. "Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region round about the Jordan; and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said unto them, Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matt. 3:5-7).

2. "I indeed baptize you in water unto repentance" (Matt. 3:11).

3. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him" (Matt. 3:13).

4. "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water" (Matt. 3:16).

From these passages we make the following deductions:

1. The people "went out" unto John, to the place where he was baptizing.

2. After they got there, they were "baptized in the river Jordan."

3. John saw Pharisees and Sadducees "coming to his baptism."

4. John said: "I . . . baptize you in water."

5. Jesus went to the "Jordan . . . to be baptized."

6. "Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water."

ARGUMENT.—People *never* go to a river to be sprinkled or poured. They are *never* sprinkled or poured in a river. They are *never* sprinkled or poured "in water." They *never* "went up straightway from the water" in instances of sprinkling and pouring. People *often* go to a river to be buried in baptism. They are *often* buried in baptism in a river. They are *always* buried "in water" when they are buried in baptism. They *always* "went up straightway from the water" after a burial in baptism. So, burial in baptism fulfills all the requirements, so far as Matthew's record goes.

II. THE GOSPEL OF MARK.

1. "John came, who baptized in the wilderness and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judæa, and all they of Jerusalem; and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins" (Mark 1:4, 5).

2. "I baptized you in water; but he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit" (Mark 1:8).

3. "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus

came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon him" (Mark 1:9, 10).

Almost the same deductions may be made from these passages that were made from those in Matthew.

1. The people "went out" unto John to the place where he was baptizing.

2. When they reached there, "they were baptized . . . in the Jordan."

3. John said: "I baptized you in water."

4. We learn "that Jesus came, . . . and was baptized . . . in the Jordan."

5. We learn, too, that he was "straightway coming up out of the water" in connection with his baptism.

ARGUMENT.—It is *never* necessary to go to a river to be sprinkled or poured. The idea of sprinkling or pouring in a river is not in line with modern methods of sprinkling and pouring. Did one ever see a person sprinkled or poured "in water"? With sprinkling and pouring, "straightway coming up out of the water" has no connection whatever. They are strangers in fact, in reason, in the history of sprinkling and pouring, and in the Bible. It is *often* necessary to go to a river to be buried in baptism. It is in line with reason to be buried in baptism in a river. Did one ever see a person buried in baptism who was not buried "in water"? "Straightway coming up out of the water" follows burial in baptism as naturally as perfect day follows sunrise. They were joined together when Jesus was baptized, and they can not be separated. Thus burial in baptism fulfills every requirement of Mark's record. Sprinkling and pouring are out of harmony altogether, so far as the second Gospel is concerned.

III. The Gospel of Luke.

This Gospel has little to say that would aid us in deciding the question under consideration; but we give the following passage because it is translated "with water" instead of "in water," as in Matthew, Mark and John:

"John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but there cometh he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire" (Luke 3:16).

We learn that John baptized "with water."

Argument.—The preposition "with" is defined: "To denote association in respect of situation or environment" (Webster's International Dictionary). A man may be sprinkled "with water," poured "with water" or buried "with water," according to Webster's definition of "with." If the Greek word "sprinkle" had been used in this passage, the controversy might forever end in favor of sprinkling; but it was not used, so the advantage is on the side of burial in baptism. Not only is the word translated or transferred "baptize" on this side of the question, but Matthew and Mark are witnesses, as we have already shown. Where did John baptize people? "In the river Jordan." Do people ever go to a river to be sprinkled or poured? No. Are they ever seen "straightway coming up out of the water" after sprinkling or pouring? Never. So, Luke is in perfect harmony with Matthew and Mark.

IV. The Gospel of John.

1. "John answered them, saying, I baptize in water" (John 1:26).

2. "And John also was baptizing in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there" (John 3: 23).

From these Scriptures we learn:

1. That John baptized "in water."

2. That he baptized in a certain place "because there was much water there."

ARGUMENT.—People are never sprinkled or poured "in water." They are always "in water" when they are buried in baptism. It is necessary to be "in water" to be buried in baptism. Sprinkling and pouring do not require "much water." Burial in baptism meets this requirement. "In water" and "much water" are as widely separated from sprinkling and pouring as the east is from the west. "In water" and "much water" are so closely associated with burial in baptism that no process of reasoning can separate them in studying the question of Scriptural requirements along this line. Burial of the penitent believer in water for baptism is in perfect harmony with the teaching of the fourth Gospel.

V. THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

"And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip; and the eunuch saw him no more, for he went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8: 36-39).

From this record of baptism we have a great deal of evidence. It may be summed up as follows:

1. They "came to a certain water."
2. They "both went down into the water."
3. They both "came up out of the water."

ARGUMENT.—In sprinkling and pouring, the water is taken to the man; the man does not go to the water. In burial in baptism, the preacher and the candidate always go to the water. In cases of sprinkling and pouring, the preacher and candidate *never* go "down into the water." Neither do they come "up out of the water." In cases of burial in baptism, they *always* go "down into the water" and come "up out of the water." Why did Philip go "down into the water" with the eunuch? He did it to fulfill our Saviour's command concerning baptism. But some one says: "Philip sprinkled or poured the eunuch after they went into the water." Are preachers in the habit of taking people into the water to sprinkle or pour them? Certainly not. Neither did Philip have such a fashion of doing things. The same reason that prompted Philip to go "down into the water" to baptize men should cause preachers to-day to follow his example. Is it not a fact that the same thing which keeps people out of the water to-day would have kept Philip and the eunuch out of it? Of necessity they "went down into the water." If it had been unnecessary, they would not have done so. So far as the action of baptism is concerned, sprinkling and pouring do not meet a single requirement of the case in hand. Burial in baptism meets every requirement.

VI. ROMANS AND COLOSSIANS.

1. "We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death" (Rom. 6:3).

2. "Having been buried with him in baptism" (Col. 2:12).

From these Scriptures we learn:

1. That baptism is a burial.
2. Both are agreed concerning the matter.

ARGUMENT.—Sprinkling and pouring are so widely separated from burial "in baptism" that no wisdom, human or divine, can blend them. Burial in baptism is an absolute fulfillment of the passages in hand.

Note the conclusion of the whole matter:

1. "Baptized in the river."
2. "Baptized in water."
3. "Baptized with water."
4. "Went up straightway from the water."
5. "Straightway coming up out of the water."
6. "Much water."
7. "Came to the water."
8. "Went down into the water."
9. "Came up out of the water."
10. "Buried through baptism."
11. "Buried in baptism."

Sprinkling and pouring meet one requirement of Bible baptism. It is "with water." Burial in baptism meets every requirement. The man who obeys his Saviour in baptism must be able to say: "I went to the water; I went down into the water; I was buried in much water; I came up out of the water."

LESSON REVIEW FROM MEMORY.

1. How and where did John baptize?
2. What does baptism symbolize?
3. Describe Christ's baptism.
4. Describe the eunuch's baptism.
5. What are the requirements of Scriptural baptism?

MEMORY REFERENCES.—1 Pet. 2:21-24; Heb. 10:36; Jude 3; Jas. 4:17; Eph. 2:18-22.

LESSON XXII.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

LESSON TEXT.—"This is my body which was given for you: this do in remembrance of me."—Luke 22:19.

A monument more enduring than marble was left by our Lord in his "Last Supper." To keep this feast in his memory is to approach the very Holy of Holies in the temple of Christianity. The inquirer should be instructed concerning the privileges and obligations of this sacred institution, without which no life can be truly Christian. The Lord's Supper is too often considered in a way that indicates total indifference to its importance. That one can partake of it or leave it alone will not meet the requirements of our Lord's teaching on the subject. Whoever is brought to Christ must be made to realize the importance of the weekly communion. When it is properly understood by the church at large we may expect to see the dawn of an era of deep religious life. No one can approach the Lord's Supper once a week with an adequate knowledge of its meaning, without being brought so close to Christ that to leave him before another communion hour would seem almost impossible. All the imagined benefits of the so-called "New Thought" and the much-vaunted "Mental Science" are to be found here in reality by an actual communion with Christ.

The following Scriptures should be studied: Matt. 26:17-30; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:1-33; Acts 20:7-12; 1 Cor. 10:14-22; 1 Cor. 11:17-29.

Some Important Facts.

1. We are *commanded* to observe the Lord's Supper.

"This do in remembrance of me" makes it a positive institution. Our obligation to observe it depends solely on our recognition of Christ's authority. It is argued that to observe the Lord's Supper is a privilege rather than a duty. The same may be said of everything commanded by our Lord. "This do" is as positive as any command that ever fell from the Master's lips. The fact that Christ commands us to remember him in this sacred observance does not take away from its beauty as a high and holy privilege for the child of God. Whoever loves the Lord will want to be found obeying him in this beautiful memorial.

2. It should be observed on the first day of the week.

Acts 20:7 indicates that this was the purpose of the coming together of the disciples. The same thought is suggested in 1 Cor. 11:18, 20, 22, when Paul blames the Corinthians when this was not made the primary object in coming together. This ought to be emphasized in the churches to-day. The Lord's Supper too often comes in for a poor share of the hour of worship.

3. The Lord's Supper is the weekly judgment-seat of the individual saint.

"Let a man prove himself." This calls for a rigid self-investigation. The wisdom of looking on the observance of this feast as a time for self-examination is obvious. Whoever takes the communion seriously will have difficulty in standing before his own conscience if his week has been full of evil thoughts and deeds. It is not a time when we may judge the life of another. We can not answer for them at the Lord's table any more than we can answer for them in the final judg-

ment. "For, he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body." These profound words are conscience-searching enough to constrain one to earnestly desire to be always ready and worthy to sit at the Lord's table. If we are unworthy at this weekly memorial, how much more shall we be unworthy to meet him in the last day.

4. It is a personal memorial.

"This do in remembrance of me." This makes the matter directly personal. Of course, it is a memorial of Christ's death, but we must not lose sight of the fact that he has said, *"Remember me."* By remembering him *personally* we proclaim his *death* to the world. His *death* is the thing the world must remember until it comes to *him.* "Remember me" carries with it the thought that Christ is away. He has returned to the Father, but, before returning, he left us this memorial of *himself.* Death is in the memorial, but it is *Christ's* death. It is a memorial in which Christ is craving for his disciples to remember him.

5. It is a testimony to the world.

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." So the Lord's Supper becomes more than a memorial. The great fact that it proclaims is the very truth on which the salvation of the world rests: "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." The world must ever be impressed with the observance of this feast because the tragic story of how Christ "tasted death" for humanity is the primary thought which it suggests to the world. And there is no more impressive way of showing the solemnity of the death of Christ.

6. The obligation to observe it is limited to the church.

It is impossible for one to remember Christ who has not first loved and obeyed him. "Go make disciples, . . . teaching them to observe all things which I have commanded you," would necessarily include the observance of this feast. This view is supported by the Scripture lessons that have been studied in connection with this lesson. In New Testament times no one out of Christ was entitled to have any part in the Lord's Supper save as a witness.

7. The obligation to observe it is limited by his final advent.

"Till he come." Thus it becomes a part of the Christian life to be continued until the Lord's final coming. "Be thou faithful unto death" applies here as in other Christian duties and privileges. Faithfulness at the Lord's table would change the deportment of the whole church and ultimately evangelize the world.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. Why should the inquirer be instructed concerning the Lord's Supper?
2. What has indifference done to this sacred memorial?
3. Why is this memorial commanded?
4. How often should it be observed?
5. How is it the weekly judgment of the saint?
6. Explain it as a personal memorial.
7. What testimony does it give to the world?
8. Who may observe this feast?
9. How long must the church keep the feast?
10. What would faithfulness in its observance do for the world?

Memory References.—Heb. 2:9; 1 Cor. 15:20; Isa. 53:10-12; Ex. 12:17; John 12:32, 33.

LESSON XXIII.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

LESSON TEXT.—"But like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living."—1 Pet. 1:15.

Many soul-winning efforts have failed ultimately because the Christian life has not been properly emphasized by soul-winners in dealing with the unsaved. Most men have an idea that one ought to be better in becoming a Christian, but few of them ever think of drawing a definite line between right and wrong. Instead of a small notion of goodness, we ought to have a large view of righteousness. The one whom we would win to Christ should be taught something of the meaning of the Christian life *before a single step is taken in the direction of the Kingdom of God.* This will reduce backsliding to the minimum. Often, in our anxiety to bring an inquirer to a decision, we neglect to place the proper stress on the things pertaining to life in the church of Christ. The need of teaching at this point can not be exaggerated. The duties, privileges and obligations of church membership ought to be pointed out to the inquirer *in advance.* Many have gone out from the church because they did not know what was expected of them. Faithful teaching and Christian fellowship will help the new convert to begin the Christian life under the most auspicious circumstances. By no other means can the convert to Christ make sure that he will not return to the world.

Some Necessary Duties.

1. The Christian ought to go to church.

The blessings and privileges of this pleasant duty are almost too obvious to mention. The observance of the Lord's Supper is one of the first of these. To get out of the habit of going to church is to get out of the habit of being a faithful Christian. By becoming a part of the church life one only aids the organized effort of the church to save the world. "Where your treasure is there will your heart be also." When one's treasure is in Christ he will say with the Psalmist of old: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

2. The Christian ought to support the church.

Giving is clearly taught in the word of God. After all, one gets out of Christianity as one puts into it. A definite portion of our goods ought to be set aside for the work of the church. The offering was taken weekly in the New Testament times. No good call should fall on deaf ears when the welfare of the church is at stake. The amount to be given must be decided by the giver. There is no New Testament precedent for tithing. Some are not able to tithe. Others could well afford to give the half to the work of the Lord.

3. The Christian ought to read the Bible.

(Refer to lesson on "Bible Study.")

4. The Christian ought to pray.

(Refer to lesson on "Prayer.")

5. The Christian ought to be a soul-winner.

The winning of souls is the primary work of the church. The church is God's organization for carrying on his work in the world. Every church-member should be so loyal to that organization that no unsaved

person in the community could be excused on the plea that nobody had tried to save him. Soul-winning is the Christian's highest joy.

6. The Christian must live a good life.

Nothing can atone for a wicked life in the church of the holy Christ. The church is a "city that is set on a hill." The whole world looks upon her, and nothing more quickly brings reproach than an evil life in her membership. "Be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living" is not an idle message. It is the very essence of Christianity. A good life will win others when argument and appeal have failed utterly. Christ, the founder of the church, has set us the one perfect example. We must seek to make our lives measure up toward his standard.

7. The Christian must be loyal to Christ and the Bible.

The demand for loyalty to Christ was never greater. The new convert will find many temptations calling him to disloyalty. Christ will be betrayed in the house of his friends: the Bible will be discarded by the pulpit; the careless will place violent hands on things sacred. But none of these things should cause us to swerve from him. He died for us; we must live for him. The Bible is God's word and Christ is God's Son, and only harm can come to him who is disloyal to these truths.

8. It is enough to be just a Christian.

One should be a Christian in name as well as in life. "The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." The name has remained because it designates them properly. To be anything else than a Christian in name or in life is to become sectarian. One may unconsciously become sectarian, but this can not hide the shame of it. The Bible only makes Christians only.

This name should be enough to satisfy any who would honor Christ. The new convert should be taught that division among God's children is wrong and that the sure way to unity is through the loyal Christian life.

Some of the Blessings.

Unnumbered blessings are offered to the obedient. A careful reading of the following Scriptures will show that Christianity is its own compensation, whatever death may bring: Matt. 5:1-12; 10:16-22. Mark 4:31-35; 9:38-41. Luke 12:22-31; 15:11-32. John 14:15-31; 15:1-12. Rom. 12:1-21. Gal. 5:22-26.

The Christian has numerous advantages over the unbeliever.

1. He is happier.
2. He is better.
3. He does more good in the world.
4. He makes others happier.
5. He has a part in the greatest institution on earth —the church.
6. He has comfort in sorrow.
7. He has forgiveness in time of sin.
8. He has a mediator between him and God.
9. He has hope of another life.
10. His life prepares him for a happy death.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. Why has soul-winning often failed?
2. What should the inquirer be taught?
3. Why should the Christian go to church?
4. How should the church be supported?
5. What is the value of reading the Bible?
6. Why should the Christian pray?
7. Why should the Christian win souls?

8. What is meant by a good life?
9. Why is loyalty to Christ so much needed?
10. What is the value of being simply a Christian?
11. Name some of the blessings of Christianity.
12. Name some of the advantages of the Christian over the unbeliever.

MEMORY REFERENCES.—Acts 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:14-16; Phil. 1:27, 28; Gal. 6:16; Col. 3:1, 2; Rom. 1:8; Acts 11:26; 1 Thess. 3:12, 13.

LESSON XXIV.

PRAYER.

LESSON TEXT.—"Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working."—Jas. 5:16.

In many respects the privilege of prayer is the richest gift of our Creator and Father. It is almost too wonderful to believe that man may be on speaking terms with God. But the soul-winner must know *from personal experience* that prayer is a precious reality, and he must seek to teach the inquirer how to approach the throne of grace. That water quenches man's thirst is not more certain than that God hears and answers the prayers of his children. Once man has come to God in perfect obedience, he may always find him an ever-present help in time of every need. Many Christians have broken down under the burden of sin because they did not realize that God could and would forgive them. Many hearts have been crushed in comfortless sorrow because they did not know that God could heal them. Many hopes have been blasted for want of prayer-wings to carry them upward. Prayer is the key to the portal of heaven, and Christ gives it into the hand of every obedient subject of the gospel.

SOME CONDITIONS OF PRAYER.

1. Right living is the first condition of prayer. No one could continue in unrighteousness and ex-

pect God to answer prayer. "The face of the Lord is against them that do evil." To *practice* sin and continue in prayer would be paradoxical. An earnest desire to forsake a besetting sin may be accompanied by a prayer that will work wonders for him who sincerely and unreservedly confesses his sin. "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers." Righteousness and prayer are the handmaidens of perfect contentment.

2. Prayer must be offered in the name of Christ.

"Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father *in my name,* he may give it to you." This is one of our Saviour's most wonderful promises. That he has given us the privilege of using his name to obtain what could not come by any other is a blessing that every Christian ought to hold in sacred trust, never allowing it to slip away. The name of Christ alone gives the child of God the right of way to the throne of grace.

3. Prayer must be subservient to the will of God.

"And this is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us." Here is the ever-present danger-line in prayer. It is so hard to say always, "Thy will be done." Proud human nature is reluctant to surrender unconditionally to the will of God. But there is no other way to reach him through prayer.

4. Secret prayer will be openly rewarded.

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee." This Scripture is in harmony

with our Lord's teaching everywhere: he would have us know the joy of being alone with God. Prayer is such a personal matter that the meaning of it is lost to one who seeks to make a public display of it.

Some Blessings of Prayer.

1. Prayer availeth much.

"The supplication of a righteous man availeth much." How much prayer avails depends upon the righteousness and activity of the one who prays. God does not promise that prayer will avail *everything*. We could answer many of our prayers by more diligently serving the Lord. It is unreasonable to expect God to do for us what we can do for ourselves. When we have failed utterly; when strength is gone; when hope droops; when great sorrow comes upon us—then we may count on prayer to bring help from above.

2. Prayer will obtain pardon for the child of God.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This, to the Christian, is the most glorious promise in the Bible. Many disciples of our Saviour have gone down under the wear and tear of the world because they did not seem to know that pardon would be theirs for the asking. This must not be regarded as an inducement to sin, but it must be taken as a sure refuge when sin sweeps over the soul.

(Refer to lessons on "The Samaritans" and "Saul of Tarsus.")

The Attitude in Prayer.

The posture of the physical body is of little importance in prayer. It is the attitude of heart and mind that counts. One may pray:

1. Standing (Mark 11:25).
2. Kneeling (Mark 14:35).
3. Lying down (2 Kings 20:1-3).
4. Sitting (Job 2:13).

Importunate Prayers.

Many questions arise as to the length of prayer and the time to be spent in praying. Consecrated common sense will aid us much in these questions. But the importunate prayer has always left victory in its wake. Some examples of prayer are as follows:

1. Jacob prayed *all night.*
2. Jesus prayed *three* times in Gethsemane.
3. Elijah prayed *seven* times for rain.
4. Saul prayed *three* days in Damascus.

We are taught to "pray without ceasing"; to "continue instant in prayer"; to "lift up holy hands and pray everywhere"; to "watch and pray." Indeed, the Bible makes prayer a vital part of the Christian life. Without it no one can keep in touch with God.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. What is the meaning of the lesson text?
2. Why is prayer a rich privilege?
3. Why is right living a condition of prayer?
4. Why pray in the name of Christ?
5. Why must we pray according to God's will?
6. Why pray in secret?
7. What are some of the blessings of prayer?
8. What should be our posture in prayer?
9. Give examples of importunate prayer.
10. Why is prayer a part of the Christian life?

Memory References.—Matt. 6:9-13; Mark 11:25; John 15:16; 1 John 5:14; Eph. 6:18; Acts 12:5.

LESSON XXV.

DIFFICULTIES—DIVINE HEALING

LESSON TEXT.—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father."—John 14:12.

The soul-winner of to-day everywhere meets the doctrine of "Divine Healing" as taught by a few sects which make that their chief tenet. The advocates of the doctrine, for the most part, were formerly members of the several denominations. They were won by the *apparent* truth and beauty of the new doctrine. The phenomenal growth of one or two of these sects compels the soul-winner to prepare to answer intelligently and Scripturally the questions that will invariably arise concerning the doctrine of healing in the churches. The following questions are most frequently raised:

1. If divine healing is unscriptural, how do you account for the remarkable growth of one religious body teaching it?

2. Why should not disease be healed to-day as in the days of Christ and his apostles?

3. Why not believe what the Bible teaches about healing if we are to believe the Bible at all?

The first question may be answered by saying that the growth of a religious body does not prove its doctrines to be true. Such an argument would establish the Scriptural right of scores of religious bodies to exist. Truth is independent of majorities.

The second and third questions are answered in the lesson which follows.

Healing in the Great Commission.

Read Mark 16: 15-18.

The advocate of divine healing argues strenuously that this proves conclusively his favorite doctrine. He omits all of these promised blessings except the last. Note carefully that this Scripture promises five specific things:

1. "They shall cast out demons."
2. "They shall speak with new tongues."
3. "They shall take up serpents."
4. "If they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them."
5. "They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

If he insists that the doctrine of divine healing is abiding, his own logic will compel him to admit the other four statements. A test to prove the folly of his position could easily be made.

Read Mark 16: 19, 20.

The key to all Bible teaching on the subject of healing is the last verse of Mark's Gospel: "And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and *confirming the word* with the signs following."

The signs were given to *"confirm the word."* They were not given for any other reason.

Read Heb. 2: 1-4.

The fourth verse of this portion of Scripture carries out the same idea as the last verse of Mark's Gospel: "God also *bearing witness with them,* both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will."

God confirmed the preached Word by bearing witness with his disciples by signs, wonders, manifold powers and by gifts of the Holy Spirit.

It does not take an extraordinary knowledge of the Bible to grasp the meaning of such passages. If the signs were given to *confirm the Word,* what need would there be of signs *after the confirmation of the Word?* God's word was confirmed nineteen hundred years ago. Twentieth-century miracles are too late to add to that confirmation. When the signs finished their work they passed away because there was no longer any need of them.

There is no evidence that the early disciples used their miraculous powers for any other purpose than the ones already mentioned. Paul gives proof of this in two instances:

1. He left a friend at Miletus sick.

"Erastus remained at Corinth; but Trophimus I left at Miletus sick" (2 Tim. 4:20).

If Paul could heal for all purposes, he was certainly most indifferent to his friend's physical condition. The simple truth is that God limited the powers of the early disciples so his gifts to them could not be used to promote their own selfish interests. The so-called healing miracles of to-day are partisan in the main and used for selfish ends.

2. Epaphroditus was sick nigh unto death from overwork in the service of Christ (Phil. 2:25-30).

This proves the falsity of modern delusions about sickness being unreal. Instead of allowing this friend to become dangerously ill, Paul would have cured him immediately if he could have done so. But he was not allowed to prostitute his powers to heal under such conditions.

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The Book of Acts contains four notable records concerning the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit. Twice this power came directly from heaven, and twice it came by the laying on of hands.

1. Read Acts 2: 1-12.

The Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples, and they spake with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. No reason could be assigned for this miraculous gift except that it was used to the very end it accomplished. *It confirmed the word of God in Jerusalem.*

2. Read Acts 8: 14-19.

The Holy Spirit was imparted by the laying on of the apostles' hands. The gospel was being preached in a new place, and this power was given to bear witness to its truth. *It confirmed the word of God in Samaria.*

3. Read Acts 10: 44-48.

The Holy Spirit fell on the house of Cornelius, and they were enabled to speak with tongues and magnify God. The Jewish disciples were amazed because the Gentiles received the gift of the Holy Spirit. This shows that the gift came upon the Gentiles to convince the Jews that Gentiles were acceptable unto God. Peter bears out this statement in his explanation to the church of Jerusalem (Acts 11: 12-18). *The signs of the apostolic age were given to confirm the word of God among the nations, not merely to cure sickness.*

4. Read Acts 19 : 1-7.

The Holy Spirit was given to the Ephesians by the laying on of Paul's hands, and they spake with tongues and prophesied. Here, again, the gospel was established in a new place, and the *signs confirmed the word of God in Ephesus.*

Proof-texts Frequently Quoted.

1. Matt. 10: 5-10.

Concerning this passage it may be said that it bears no relationship to Christianity. It was a part of the first commission to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The Great Commission contains the conditions of salvation and the working orders for the church.

2. Jas. 5: 13-16.

This does not assume difficult proportions when we examine it in the light of God's reason for giving the signs. The Book of James was written "to the twelve tribes of the Dispersion," to the "scattered disciples." They would use their powers to the end that the word of God might be confirmed.

The apostles performed miracles and imparted the power to do so to others, but that power never extended beyond the third person, according to the Bible records.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. What three questions arise concerning healing?
2. How may the first be answered?
3. What special powers are promised in the Great Commission?
4. Quote the last verse of Mark's Gospel.
5. Why were the signs given?
6. Quote Heb. 2: 1-4.
7. Tell about the illness of Paul's friends.
8. Give the four special records mentioned in Acts.
9. What thought is common to all four?
10. Through how many persons did miraculous power extend?

Memory References.—1 Tim. 4: 14; 2 Tim. 1: 6; 1 Cor. 12: 1-12; 13: 8.

LESSON XXVI.

DIFFICULTIES—DENOMINATIONALISM.

LESSON TEXT.—"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."—Eph. 4:4-6.

The greatest foe of soul-winning is sectarianism. The multitude of denominations is bewildering to the ordinary inquirer. There are so many churches to choose from that some are not able to make a choice. Most of the difficulties confronted in soul-winning are born of some false teaching of sectarianism. The various methods of getting religion, the loose schemes of modern evangelism, and the unscriptural and unreasonable teaching about church membership, all unite to confuse the mind of the unsaved person, until he does not join any church. The average outsider does not know that there is any difference between one denomination and another, so he has no convictions whatever along denominational lines. One church is "just as good as another" to him. A little tactful interview with one of this sort will open his eyes to the Scriptural view of denominationalism and prepare him for hearing the simple gospel message. Whatever else the soul-winner is, he must not be sectarian; his business is to make Christians by teaching the gospel of Christ. Great care must be exercised to avoid being drawn aside into partisan controversy.

Christ's Prayer for Unity.

Read John 17:7-23.

This prayer reveals our Saviour's anxiety for the unity of all believers of the word of God. He assigns two reasons for desiring that unity:

1. "That the world may believe."
2. "That the world may know."

And these are sufficient reasons for unity. The divisions among God's children have caused more doubt and unbelief than the teaching of the world's great infidels. Christian unity would bring the world to believe in Christ, and, believing in him, it would soon know that God had sent him.

Note.—It is better to present God's word than to argue with the inquirer. Show him the beauty of helping to answer our Lord's prayer for Christian unity, and seek to meet his questions with the teaching of the Bible. The following method is a most insistent and successful way of meeting the objections usually urged against unity:

1. "Christian unity is impossible."

Answer—Christ prayed for it.

2. "All can not see alike."

Answer—Christ prayed for it.

3. "I do not believe in unity."

Answer—Christ prayed for it.

4. "It will never come to pass."

Answer—Christ prayed for it.

If the soul-winner will stand by that answer to every objection offered, he will soon find the one who objects breaking down under the strong pressure of the convincing truth. *Whatever Christ prayed for ought to be desired by any one who really believes in him. What-*

ever Christ prayed for is right. Be patient with the inquirer, but do not allow him to dodge the issue involved in Christ's prayer for the unity of all believers.

Some Common Questions.

The inquirer has a number of questions that are usually asked during an interview on the subject of denominationalism. They are about as follows:

1. "Is not one way as good as another?"

Answer—John 14:6; Acts 4:12.

2. "Why do we have so much division if all claim to believe the same Bible?"

Answer—1 Cor. 1:12-15.

It may be observed here that all of the divisions among the people of God were caused by confusion over something not taught in the Bible. The teaching of the Bible itself is not confusing and contradictory.

3. "Do not wise men in all churches disagree?"

Answer—1 Cor. 1:18-21.

4. "How can I be expected to know what is right?"

Answer—2 Tim. 2:15; Rom. 14:12.

(Refer to lesson on "The Church.")

It is not difficult to deal with an honest inquirer, and one could hardly expect to reach any other kind. Intelligence that is consecrated in loyalty to Christ and his word will win a victory over the man who is actually in earnest about knowing the way of life. Denominationalism can not stand before a Scriptural appeal for Christian unity. The very greatness of the appeal impresses the man of broad parts. The whole argument is summed up in a call for men to take God at his word. Whoever does this will be just what God wants him to be—a Christian—no more, no less. This should be enough for the comfort of all believers.

Some Worthy Appeals.

A few strong statements in favor of Christian unity may be used by the personal worker in dealing with most inquirers. Whoever is interested himself would like to see others interested, so urge these points:

1. Sectarianism is a waste of money.

Point out some town that has several churches and show how one church could do the work of all.

2. Sectarianism keeps many out of the church.

This is enough to condemn it. All would know the meaning of church membership if all churches would become one body in Christ, because then nobody would need to inquire about "which church to join."

3. Sectarianism divides communities and families.

The division among God's people causes many sad situations in families whose members are scattered about in the several denominations. Many communities, too, are divided into factions on account of religious quarrels of a sectarian nature. Sectarianism strikes at the very foundation of the brotherhood of man.

4. Sectarianism is opposed to the prayer of Christ.

No one who loves Christ should want to have a part in anything that is opposed to his prayer and teaching. Whoever takes him at his word aids the cause of Christian unity.

Lesson Review from Memory.

1. What is the greatest foe of soul-winning?
2. Where do most difficulties come from?
3. What is the chief business of the soul-winner?
4. What reason did Christ give in praying for unity?
5. What is the best way to meet objections?

6. Give some questions concerning unity, and answer them with Bible teaching.

7. How will consecrated loyalty win?

8. What does one become who takes God at his word?

9. Give four statements against sectarianism.

10. How does sectarianism interfere with the brotherhood of man?

MEMORY REFERENCES.—Ps. 133:1; 1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 12:4, 5; Eph. 2:18-22; 3:14, 15; 4:1-3.

LESSON XXVII.

DIFFICULTIES—GENERAL.

LESSON TEXT.—"But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them: and that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."—2 Tim. 3:14, 15.

The soul-winner is beset with all sorts of difficulties in his task. He may be unable to answer all questions put to him. Nor is it necessary for him to do so. Nothing is ever gained by argument over the little questions that arise. Let the gospel story be mastered, and the soul-winner can conquer an army of *honest* inquirers; *dishonest* ones can not be conquered. Every considerable effort to save souls will draw enemies of the simple gospel into the field of action. They haunt the soul-winner with questions of irrelevant character, and strive to furnish the inquirer with catch questions calculated to thwart the progress of the gospel. The soul-winner must be too big to notice these things. In soul-winning, one must resolve never to be led from the main issue by religious cranks and people with hobbies. It is only by patient and persistent teaching of God's word that we shall be able to bring men and women to a complete surrender. The soul-winner must never forget that "the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." It will be so received by almost every person to whom it is declared.

The Common Difficulties.

1. The Sabbath question.

There is little use to try to meet volubility with volubility when one comes in contact with a Sabbatarian zealot. Anyway, the soul-winner must not talk too much. The whole question of "Sabbath or Lord's Day —Which?" is settled by the difference between the law and the gospel. Teach the inquirer this difference, and he will forget all questions about keeping the Sabbath. And no progress can be made until this difference is seen.

(Refer to lesson on "Divisions of the Bible.")

2. Meeting the doubter.

Honest doubters are comparatively few, and some secret sin is usually at the bottom of their doubt. Nothing will be gained by trying to prove some of the "seeming impossibilities of the Old Testament." Never argue about Jonah and the whale or the astronomical feat of Joshua. These questions never really troubled the so-called doubter anyway. Try to get at the real secret of the doubter's life—his sin. Make the interview dwell upon his need of Christ. Keep the doubter close to Christ, and victory will follow.

(Refer to lessons on "Sin" and "Jesus Christ.")

Press home the truths suggested in these two lessons, and try to make the doubter think on them. Remember, too, that doubt is a moral as well as a mental question. Doubt and righteous living can not dwell together.

3. Meeting excuses.

Most people who refuse to make a decision for Christ do so without any adequate reason. Here, again, the worker must use something substantial. Christ's

own lesson on the subject of excuses is the most impressive in all literature.

Luke 14: 15-24. Master this Scripture, and urge the Saviour's conclusion "that none of those men that were bidden shall taste of my supper."

4. The backslider.

Every community has its full quota of people who have wandered away from the Father's house. The most heart-searching appeal that Christ ever made was his story of the prodigal son.

Luke 15: 11-32. Persuade the backslider to listen to a reading of this parable, or, better still, learn the story so it may be told with all the tenderness of the divine compassion that our Saviour put into it. The stubborn and unrepentant will of the wanderer must be broken down under the strain of the divine story.

5. Meeting people who are too busy with worldly affairs.

This class is in the majority. Many are actually so obsessed with pleasure and money-making that they never give any thought to the higher things. Another of Christ's parables strikes at the very heart of this question.

Luke 12: 13-21. This is the common fate of all who leave God out of the program of life.

6. Procrastination.

This is the universal difficulty. Men are always putting off salvation. They are always awaiting some more convenient season. The road to ruin is paved with good intentions. Most people are without Christ for the simple reason that they have put off salvation. To be unprepared to meet God is the greatest calamity in life. The every-day life of man is crowded with illustrations and examples of the folly and ruin of pro-

crastination. Food eaten to-morrow does not appease the hunger of to-day. The parable of "The Ten Virgins" applies with tremendous meaning to the case of him who puts off until too late the chief duties of life.

Matt. 25: 1-13. The doors of mercy must one day close forever against the man who sins away his day of grace.

7. Prejudice.

Prejudice is usually born of sectarianism. It is the chief demon to be cast out of the heart of any man whom we would win to Christ. Bible study is the only cure. Tactfully persuade the prejudiced person to read the portions of Scripture that have to do with the particular points on which he is prejudiced. The doctrinal issues on which men are commonly biased are fairly well covered in former lessons. The personal worker may use them as occasions demand.

A Final Admonition.

Be loyal to Christ and true to the Bible in every soul-winning adventure. Surmount every difficulty by familiarity with God's word. Believe that Word with the whole heart, and live it daily before any whom you would bring to Christ. Do not take undue advantage of any unsaved person. Do not *force* any one to the front. Be too big to employ schemes with which to inveigle the souls of men. Do not take any risk when the soul of a neighbor is in eternal danger. Christ is God's Son and man's only Redeemer, and man must obey him or go to the grave without hope of salvation. Give Christ his rightful place in the great work of winning souls. Hide unselfishly and modestly behind his cross, and trust in the power of the gospel to save men and women from sin.

LESSON REVIEW FROM MEMORY.

1. Why does it not pay to argue over little things?
2. What should be mastered by the soul-winner?
3. What is done by enemies of the gospel?
4. Why should the soul-winner never allow himself to be drawn away from the main issue?
5. What must always be remembered?
6. How is the Sabbath question settled?
7. How can one best meet the doubter?
8. Give Christ's parable on excuses.
9. What is the best lesson for backsliders?
10. How may one best deal with prejudice?

MEMORY REFERENCES.—Isa. 55:1, 2; Matt. 11:28-30; Luke 11:34, 35; John 1:29; 6:36; 9:24, 25; Acts 2:40.

TWELVE LESSONS IN GROUP EVANGELISM

A Series of Practical Lessons in New Testament Evangelism

BY

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FOREWORD

WITHIN the past two years there has developed a widespread interest in the form of Christian work popularly known as Group Evangelism. Again and again we have had calls for, not only information, but a practical series of lessons or studies which might be used by volunteers, or classes of ministers.

Somewhat over three years ago we were asked by a number of interested brethren to attempt the work of promoting, and making known as widely as possible among our brethren, that form of practical promotion of the plea which expresses itself most largely in direct and contributed service and which has come to be known as Group Evangelism.

In this past three years we have traveled somewhat over 130,000 miles among our people, have spoken to tens and even hundreds of thousands of them, have prepared and sent to all our ministers four pamphlets on Group Evangelism, have written constantly for our papers, and have kept up a large correspondence with hundreds of our ministers and workers. There has never been time for the preparation of a book or even a series of lesson studies. The time and the demand now seem to call for such a study, and it is with that in view that these lesson studies are prepared.

In these lessons, we shall make no attempt to cover the entire ground. It is, of course, presumed that every worker must have a good general knowledge of the Bible and its use. It is also presumed that ministers and other workers, old and young, need practical training for various phases of the work they are to do.

For a beginner in systematic Bible study we know of nothing more practical than the first part of Moninger's "Training for Service"; for practical training in personal evangelism we know of nothing better than "Training for Personal Evangelism," by Harrison; for doctrinal study and preparation there is an abundance of good material in pamphlet, tract and book form prepared by our best and wisest teachers. These studies we recommend and commend.

These lessons are intended to cover only that which is not comprehended in any of these former treatises, and give a study which will help Christians and churches to do a larger and more unselfish service for the Master, through what is known as the contributed-service, or Group Evangelism, method.

If, in these lessons, we should sometimes repeat things said in pamphlet or newspaper article, it is only with the purpose of bringing this material together into systematized study form. C. J. S.

LESSON I.

WHAT GROUP EVANGELISM IS AND ITS PURPOSE

Lesson: Matt. 9:35-38.

Text: Acts 8:4.

I. Purpose.—The purpose of Group Evangelism is to multiply many times the number of available and active teachers and preachers of the Word, to the end that all closed churches of Christ may be speedily opened for work and service and that thousands of new communities may hear the simple New Testament message. The practical plans for accomplishing this purpose will unfold through the lessons to follow.

II. What Group Evangelism Is.—In order that all minds may be better prepared for a clear understanding of what Group Evangelism is, it is better that first we mention a few things that it is not.

1. Not an Organization.—It is not an organization in the ordinary sense of that word. Those who fear a competing organization have nothing to fear in Group Evangelism. Not being a corporation competing for patronage, Group Evangelism has no such plans or purposes. In the sense of being an agency having claims on the churches or the brotherhood or expecting to compete for patronage,

with agencies, Group Evangelism has kept itself entirely free from such claims or purposes. These facts are given to free the minds of all from unfounded fears along these lines. Group Evangelism is neither an organization nor an agency in the usual sense of these terms.

2. It Is Not Something New.—Among many there is a natural fear of that which poses as a new thing. Group Evangelism is not something new. The term so expressed may be new, but the plan of work fostered is as old as Christianity itself. For every Christian and every church of Christ and every minister of the Word to take a direct and personal interest and part in teaching his next neighbor or the next community the way of life and to show a Christian, brotherly and practical interest in their continued welfare, will certainly be recognized as quite as old as the New Testament and the church itself.

While the systematic promotion of this plan of service may be said to be new, yet that is hardly true. It is rather a restoration of an old plan, which emphasizes the thought of the personal rather more than the delegated form of service in spreading the gospel in near-by fields.

3. It Is Not Added Machinery.—There is a perfectly legitimate fear of more religious machinery. Counting the many denominational and interdenominational organizations, religious, reform, social and uplift, each with its national, State, district, county, township and city secretaries, the grand total seems to multiply to the point where the directional ma-

chinery adds confusion rather than service. Group Evangelism has conscientiously avoided the building of any such promotional machine. In any particular, local task, as in a district, there is encouraged and promoted the largest possible assignment of tasks and division of labor all fittingly framed together, but, in the sense of a national or State machine, seeking power, prestige, following or support, there is none.

III. Terms Defined.—Before defining Group Evangelism, it is well to define evangelism. Before defining evangelism, we wish to give a preparatory word as to what evangelism is not. What immediately occurs to any one of us when we hear the word "evangelism"? Do we not immediately think of "revival meeting"? Evangelism is not merely the revival meeting. The revival is only one phase of evangelism.

1. Evangelism Defined.—Evangelism is the use of the word of God by as nearly as possible every Christian to win to Christ as nearly as possible every one who is not a Christian.

Thus evangelism, instead of being merely a brief and spasmodic annual effort of an already organized and living church, and featured only by a few experts, is a constant duty of every Christian. Real New Testament evangelism, therefore, has a much wider content than the usual thought, and should function everywhere, from the isolated Christian, on and up through the isolated group of Christians, the isolated Bible school, the isolated church of Christ, on to the great concerted efforts intended to carry

the gospel to the farthermost outposts of mankind. Perhaps one failing in our thinking on evangelism is that we have had the tendency to leap in our thinking to the ultimate end and stopping-place of evangelism rather than to continue to keep in mind as well the natural and essential beginning-place.

2. General Meaning.—Group Evangelism is a plan of missionary evangelism frankly offered to the churches, based on contributions of service, and dedicated to the solution of the problem of finding an adequate force of laborers for the Lord's harvest.

IV. Hypotheses of Group Evangelism.—The promotion of Group Evangelism is based on the following ten hypotheses:

1. That what Christ commanded to be done can be done.

2. That if the laborers are to be found, they can be found nowhere but among the members of churches of Christ.

3. That the larger part of the teaching and preaching power of every congregation lies dormant while the unsaved perish.

4. That included among our five thousand ministers, thirty thousand elders, tens of thousands of other officers and teachers, and a million and a quarter plain Christians, is an abundance of power and ability to carry the message wherever we wish, and in one generation.

5. That our ministers and people will respond with an abundant outpouring of life and service if generally apprised, aroused, inspired, enrolled and trained, and directed to the specific tasks.

6. That to do these things last named is entirely feasible, and that in so doing an entirely new vision of gospel service will accrue to both ministers and people, together with increased joy in the Master's service.

7. That if the number of closed churches is to be the cause of failure to carry the message to the unentered places, then this cause both can and ought to be immediately removed.

8. That with the forces we have it is entirely inexcusable that there should be any closed churches of Christ, except where the need for the church has ceased to exist.

9. That the message we have to impart is so simple that a wayfaring man can understand it, and that we have an abundance of people with quite sufficient ability to impart it.

10. That such a rearoused interest in the gospel message will do more to cure any ills in our brotherhood, including the shortage of laborers, than any other one thing.

V. Four Things Sought in Group Evangelism.—Any plan for evangelizing the unevangelized, wherever they may be, should always keep in mind four things that are of supreme importance and can not be overlooked. It must be:

1. **Christian.**—In its aim, fervor, patience, sympathy and scope, Christian.

2. **Scriptural.**—In its message and methods, Scriptural.

3. **Logical.**—In its planning, logical.

4. **Practical.**—In its working, practical.

By practical we mean something that will work. The finest theory may but hinder progress if it is failing to get the results, but is meantime usurping the field. That which is practical must bear the test continually of accomplishing the task proposed.

By logical, we mean that any plan proposed must be based on a recognition of the facts of men and conditions, facts material and facts psychological, as well as spiritual. It is with the test of these four requirements that we shall pursue a study of Group Evangelism and its working.

STUDY HELPS.

1. Give concretely the purpose of Group Evangelism.
2. How does the form of Group Evangelism work and promotion differ from the usual organization or agency?
3. Is Group Evangelism something new?
4. Does Group Evangelism tend to multiply promotional machinery?
5. What is usually thought of when the term "evangelism" is mentioned?
6. Give a comprehensive definition of New Testament evangelism.
7. Where and under what conditions can New Testament evangelism function?
8. Define Group Evangelism.
9. Name the ten hypotheses on which Group Evangelism promotion is based.
10. Name the four tests of any plan of missionary evangelism.

LESSON II.

WHY GROUP EVANGELISM IS NEEDED

Lesson: John 4:30-38.
Text: Matt. 13:38.

I. Introduction.

PERHAPS the surest mark of any quack nostrum or school of medicine or practice is its claim to be a "cure-all," eliminating the need for all other schools, cures or treatments. Group Evangelism makes no such claim. Its claim is that very much that is now being left undone, can, by Group-Evangelism methods, be easily and speedily accomplished. With due recognition for all the efforts that are now being made to open and revive closed churches, and enter new fields with the plea, yet there remains an appalling total undone. Group Evangelism is promoted, not as a competitor of the work of various agencies, but solely with the purpose of adding to all that is otherwise being done.

If, by laying hold of and using sources of power hitherto largely unused, it adds to the total of accomplishment, there is large, clear gain and no loss. If the work accomplished does at times parallel the work being done by other forces, there is no reason for objection, for until the forces at work are equal

to the task to be done there is every reason why the forces should be added to again and again. Group Evangelism, like any other work, should and must be measured, not only by its Scriptural intent and aims and by its proposed program, but finally by its product and its cost. Group Evangelism is needed if it efficiently meets the needs.

II. NEEDED BECAUSE OF THE SIZE OF THE TASK TO BE ACCOMPLISHED.

1. Progress Is Halted.—With all our numbers, power, culture, wealth, organization and equipment, our forward progress has been halted in recent years. For one entire generation we have been giving the figures of one and a quarter million souls. The same figures are yet given. A plea and a cause that can go so far are surely capable of going further. A plea that is worth promoting thus far is worth promoting to its ultimate end and original aims.

2. Worthy Calls Unreached.—With ten thousand churches of Christ, large and small, open and closed, and with less than five thousand ministers and evangelists, there are not only multiplied numbers of churches of Christ languishing for lack of leadership, but there are easily five thousand important centers ripe and waiting for entry.

We here incorporate, by way of illustration, excerpts from two letters like which there come a constant stream. The first is from a State in which our work has been prosecuted from the days of the pioneers and has all the usual methods of extending the cause.

DEAR BROTHER:—I have been reading of the wonderful progress made by our cause in the Western District of our State under the Group Evangelism plan. I have been hoping and praying some one would catch the vision and bring it to our district, and reach this city with an evangelist or some of the volunteers.

This is a rapidly growing city of ten thousand people, in which we have a number of members of the Christian Church, but no leadership, and so a church of Christ has never been started, and no one has ever lifted a voice to teach the New Testament plea.

If I were not totally deaf, I should try to start the work in one of the homes; but, as I am, it seems impossible.

I have been here four years, and it is the only place I have ever lived where there was no Christian Church. I do so long for the fellowship and for the communion service. I feel that I ought to do something to try to help start the work here; so, after praying long and earnestly, I have written this letter, with the hope that you may find some way to help heed this Macedonian call. Truly your brother in Christ, —— ——.

DEAR BROTHER:—I have just visited one more of the many growing towns and cities of this great State where we have no churches of Christ. There are so many more of these good and growing towns and cities in this State where we do not have churches than where we do have them. The proportion is about ten to one.

This city (B——) has a population of fifteen thousand, and is growing at the rate of a thousand a year. Naturally, among the people who come, are the usual number of members of the Christian Church; but, with no leadership, they are lost to us as they come.

There are already a goodly number here, and, like the many other towns I have visited, the field seems ripe and ready. I am positive that one good meeting, given by a stronger church and minister, would plant a good church here, as it has done in so many other places. Truly your brother in Christ, —— ——.

We have given these two concrete examples which merely illustrate the five thousand places we have mentioned. The task is so large that any and all workable means should be used to help accomplish the work. Group Evangelism is dedicated to helping to find ways to reach these fields. Here is a great need.

3. Languishing Churches a Cause of Halting.—While there are no exact figures as to the actual number of closed or dying churches, all know that the number is very large. One good State with an energetic board, in one recent year, marked off their lists 125 churches which had lived and functioned and which seemed to be dead. A study of almost any county reveals a like situation.

It was widely argued that it would be foolish to enter new places and plant new churches when apparently, because of lack of leadership, there were so many dying churches. The result was an almost complete stoppage of forward evangelistic effort to reach the unentered places. We shall deal with this phase of the subject in a subsequent lesson.

4. The Need Is for Man-power.—With ten thousand churches and less than five thousand ministers, with the stronger churches employing, using and almost wholly usurping the time of these five thousand ministers, the weaker churches must naturally struggle on to death, unless a way may be devised to send them help. It is to this task that Group Evangelism has especially been dedicated.

As a people of "the Book" and skilled in teaching "the Book," our ministers are naturally the best

equipped for teaching the Book—that is to say, for evangelism—of any group of ministers in the world.

However, to reach the needy places and the unreached would require a force of at least five thousand who could go to the needy and unreached places. To employ such a force at two thousand dollars each for a year would cost ten million dollars a year. This amount of home missionary funds is not in immediate prospect, but, if it were, it would be helpless to find the needed missionary evangelists, since there are ten thousand churches to care for and only five thousand ministers and evangelists for all purposes. How Group Evangelism proposes to help meet this need will appear in later lessons. The thought to be fixed here is "the need and the size of the task." However, it is plain that not money, but men, can solve the problem.

III. GROUP EVANGELISM IS NEEDED BECAUSE IT CAN REACH MANY PLACES THAT CAN NOT OTHERWISE BE REACHED.

It is freely admitted that there are very many places, both large and small, that can not now be reached by the ordinary means. Group Evangelism can immediately reach many of these places, even though the smallest, because most of them are not too far removed from an already existing church of Christ with an employed minister.

Wherever there is an employed minister of a church of Christ, Group Evangelism has a potential evangelist, already supported, and therefore does not need to wait to raise a fund of millions and

find or create an additional force of five thousand extra or additional men. This minister or evangelist is already backed by a society; that is to say, a church of Christ that has full authority and is already commissioned to carry the message to all those round about who have not heard it. This method should not displace the present methods and efforts, but is capable of many times multiplying the possible work and results. The details of how this kind of effort is possible and practicable will be treated in another lesson. The thought here is that where the vision and spirit of Group Evangelism prevail, it makes possible the reaching of needy and unreached places that would otherwise have to wait very long indeed.

IV. GROUP EVANGELISM IS NEEDED BECAUSE IT MAKES USE OF ENERGIES AND ABILITIES NOW UNUSED.

The miracle of modern industry consists in its discovery of how to make use of what was wasted material. The Group Evangelism plan is a plan to save the churches now perishing and dying and thus being wasted, and to save the scattered disciples in unentered communities that are being lost to the cause, by making use of the unused evangelistic abilities now being unused and wasted in almost every living church of Christ. Too much of the evangelizing power of our five thousand ministers is unused or is smothered by the performance of inconsequential tasks that others should perform. Too much of the teaching and guiding ability of our great force of officers and teachers is merely latent

and lies dormant for the lack of being put to work at the real task with practical plans for real service. It is on these sources of unused energy that Group Evangelism almost entirely relies for its accomplishments.

V. GROUP EVANGELISM IS NEEDED BECAUSE IT ADDS TO THE SUM TOTAL OF OUR BROTHERHOOD'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS, AND CONFLICTS WITH NO WORTHY ENTERPRISE.

If it is not already apparent from what has been said, it will more and more become apparent that that plan of work which subtracts nothing and adds something in the way of accomplishment is a direct contribution to accomplishment and is therefore both worthy and needed.

VI. IT IS NEEDED BECAUSE IT SPECIALIZES IN CONTRIBUTIONS OF SERVICE.

Inasmuch as our problem is a problem of manpower, human service; inasmuch as only Christian men and women can preach the gospel—it is well that there should be an enterprise which devotes itself to the task of promoting and encouraging contributions of service. It is in this that Group Evangelism specializes and is the only interest in the field that is specializing in this particular work.

VII. IT IS NEEDED BECAUSE THE WORK REKINDLES INTEREST IN THE CHURCHES THAT PARTICIPATE.

Direct and personal effort expended for a worthy cause always kindles interest among those who par-

ticipate in the work being accomplished. Group Evangelism work, therefore, is perhaps the best way on earth to arouse a general interest among all ministers and members in the task of giving the plea to others. This aroused interest comes back to the local church and serves as a refreshing influence and a blessing. The ties that bind the minister and his people are multiplied and strengthened and the home work receives new impetus.

STUDY HELPS.

1. Is Group Evangelism a competitor of other agencies in the work?

2. What is the final measure of any agency proposing to do a work?

3. What are the facts in regard to the actual and numerical progress of the Restoration movement in the past generation?

4. Are we as a people now equipped to meet the worthy calls that come?

5. What can you say as to the number of languishing and dying churches?

6. How many churches and how many ministers in the Restoration movement?

7. What problem does the shortage of ministers involve?

8. What is the main work to which Group Evangelism is dedicated?

9. Is it money or man-power that is the real problem?

10. Approximately how many important unentered places are there ripe for entry?

11. As evangelists, how should our ministers compare with the ministers of other churches?

12. How is it that Group Evangelism can quickly and easily reach many of the smaller, needy places?

13. In what way does Group Evangelism make use of hitherto wasted material?

14. In what particular form of service is it that Group Evangelism specializes?

15. What is the effect of Group Evangelism on the church that does the work?

16. Summarize six good reasons for Group Evangelism work.

LESSON III.

WHAT GROUP EVANGELISM DOES

Lesson: 2 Tim. 4:1-5.
Text: 2 Thess. 3:13.

IN this lesson we shall enumerate and discuss very briefly twelve things that Group Evangelism work accomplishes. How some of these things are accomplished will be given in more detail in later lessons. The student is asked to keep in mind the substance of preceding lessons, as each lesson will build itself upon the principles and plans suggested in the lessons preceding.

In the beginning of this lesson it should be borne in mind that we have a force of five thousand ministers who are the best equipped ministers in the world in the matter of Bible knowledge, because as a people we have specialized as a Bible people. It should also be borne in mind that the plea we preach is a simple plea, so simple that a wayfaring man can understand it and an ordinary or average Christian can teach it.

It should also be borne in mind that, while there are many closed churches and struggling churches, somewhere less than five thousand, there are approximately thirty thousand men among us who have been chosen as elders, besides many more thousands

who have had much experience in Bible teaching. Thousands of our members have college or, at least, high-school training.

Two more things should be kept in mind. First, the definition given of evangelism, and, second, the definition of Group Evangelism. These things are needed in mind, that the twelve accomplishments of Group Evangelism may be the more easily understood. We believe that all will admit that the following twelve things are thoroughly worth while:

I. GROUP EVANGELISM DOES CARRY OUR PLEA TO, AND PLANT NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHES IN, THE PLACES WE ALL ADMIT OUGHT TO BE REACHED, BUT WHICH ARE NOT NOW BEING REACHED.

By what has appeared in the foregoing lessons it will be seen that certainly some places may be reached that would not otherwise be reached, if only ministers and elders and teachers will plan to make a contribution of their services, as well as a contribution of money, to reachable places. The very nearness to the work, the ability to get to it regularly and promptly, the opportunity for understanding and sympathy—all conduce to service. The fact that this form of service has its workers so widely scattered, and so generally and generously distributed, reveals the unmeasured possibilities of the plan.

By actual test this first statement has been abundantly proven. Less than a year ago definite and detailed reports were secured from six hundred ministers and churches that had tried this form of service within the year. Aside from much other work ac-

complished by these six hundred ministers, new churches of Christ were actually planted in 151 communities, by strictly contributed and non-paid efforts. In every case provision was made for the continuation of the work and services and future development of the churches planted. If all five thousand of our ministers had done likewise, 1,250 places would have had new churches of Christ planted in them in the same time.

II. IT OPENS CLOSED CHRISTIAN CHURCH DOORS WHERE THEY WOULD PROBABLY REMAIN CLOSED—IN OTHER WORDS, IT IS A HELPFUL ANSWER TO THE DYING-CHURCH PROBLEM.

When all our ministers and church officers can be made to see that it is wrong in principle and unchristian in practice that one community should have a continual and expensive feast of gospel bread, while a half-dozen communities within easy reach have had not a crumb for months or years, then will there be found a speedy and easy way to share with the outlying, unreached, needy or struggling community. It will be seen that the Group Evangelism, or contributed-service, method is the most immediate and best equipped for getting the needed help to these places promptly and inexpensively.

This, too, has been abundantly demonstrated. The same six hundred ministers in the same year opened 252 closed churches, and set them going at regular and continuous service. Had all five thousand of our ministers engaged in the same kind of effort, twenty-one hundred closed churches would have been

reopened in practically one year. This would probably have covered every entirely closed church within the brotherhood.

III. IT ANSWERS THE QUESTION OF WHERE TO FIND THE FIVE THOUSAND EVANGELISTS THAT ARE NEEDED TO ENTER NEW FIELDS.

It will be recalled from Lesson II. that there are at least five thousand places ripe for the plea, but unentered. Such entry seems impossible because of the required five thousand men being almost wholly lacking and because the ten million dollars a year, required to employ them, is again, apparently, an impossibility for many a year.

Group Evangelism would keep in mind that we have five thousand men equipped to preach the gospel anywhere at any time; that these men are already financed with more or less adequate salaries and are backed and supported by groups of Christians only; that much of their gospel-preaching power is lost and dissipated in the performance of multiplied, unnecessary and inconsequential tasks that others can easily be trained to perform, and that others would be benefited in performing. Through short, contributed revival meetings, Sunday afternoon services and week-night preaching, five thousand new communities could hear the simple gospel plea this next year. While this should not displace any other efforts that are being made along this line, yet it could not only add to, but could multiply, the work being accomplished. Here, if at all, are to be found the five thousand needed evangelists.

IV. IT IS THE MOST PRACTICAL AND IMMEDIATE ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM OF FINDING PREACHERS FOR THE PREACHERLESS CHURCHES.

By way of testing this phase of the work, experiments have been tried in the past three years in ten different districts widely distributed, from the far South to the far North and West. Each of these districts was chosen because seriously afflicted with the ministerless-church problem. In the actual test it has been found, without exception, that when a concerted Group-Evangelism program is put on, it is relatively easy to enroll a quite adequate force of consecrated and able workers who with local training and local ministerial guidance can guide, teach and lead the small churches that have entirely lost out in the unfair struggle to secure ministers.

If our congregations, large and small, are to have ministers, teachers and leaders, they must be found in our congregations. The problem of financing is easily solved because the renewed evangelism either increases the financial ability of the church that is helped, or preaching is found from sources that do not rely wholly on the ministerial salary.

V. IT IS A PRACTICAL SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF PROTECTING THE SMALL CHURCH AGAINST THE IMMORAL OR CROOKED MAN POSING AS A PREACHER.

Here is again one of the serious problems of the smaller church. When the stronger church and minister share their knowledge, strength and ability with the weaker, and lend their strength in a local co-

operative way in all the problems, including that of securing a minister, the chance of the weaker or inexperienced church being ruined by an unworthy minister is very much decreased.

VI. IT ENCOURAGES THE STRUGGLING CHURCH AND INSPIRES THE STRONGER.

Here recall the universal psychological truth that working at a task or problem generates interest. By actual tests, from reports, it is shown that in every case where a stronger church has given of its strength and ability to help the weaker church, there has immediately appeared a revived and increased fervor and interest in the church that rendered the help. Most certainly it will follow that the display of a real and brotherly Christian interest will always encourage the weaker church.

VII. IT TAKES ADVANTAGE OF GROUP POWER AND WISDOM IN SOLVING THE PROBLEMS OF THE NEW OR STRUGGLING CHURCH—IT ENROLLS AND LENDS THE WISDOM OF THE EXPERIENCED TO ASSIST THE INEXPERIENCED.

There are many problems that afflict the smaller churches aside from or in addition to the problem of securing preaching. Many times the lack of a kindly, cool-headed counselor in matters of finance or church administration has been the rock over which a church has been wrecked. Mutual interest in the preaching leads to mutual interest and a sharing of abilities on the part of minister, officers and teachers. A Christian-spirited grouping of the churches follows as a

consequence. The cause becomes a common cause in the county or among the group. This prevents selfishness among the stronger and discouragement among the weaker churches.

VIII. It Makes Available the Latent Talent So Abundant in Every Strong Church.

Too long we have looked upon nearly all the members as sheep to be continually fed, and seldom as soldiers to render service. Again the definition of evangelism should be recalled. About 90 per cent. of the possible Christian service and power in every congregation lies dormant and undeveloped. Many who are nonentities in the large and well-organized congregation prove to be worth-while and heroic workers when placed in a place of responsibility in a smaller congregation. Here, again, we touch the field from which Group Evangelism derives hosts of valuable workers. Real church work is a thing almost unknown to the average church-member. The kind of work for men, women and young people that is outlined in the following lessons is a most valuable way to bring out the abilities that are latent in every congregation.

IX. It Avails Itself of the Advantage of a Proper Distribution of Labor and Abilities Among a Group of Ministers.

In Group Evangelism it is, of course, apparent that the larger responsibility for evangelistic meetings contributed will fall upon the ministers. It must be admitted that all ministers do not have the same

abilities along these lines. There are two advantages that accrue in the Group Evangelism work. First of all, the work itself soon develops greater evangelistic ability in the ministers. Second, when co-operating in groups the particular abilities of each may be used to supplement the other. One is a better evangelistic preacher and leader; another is a better song-leader; another has the more ability to raise money for buildings, etc.; another is a better personal caller than the rest. By group co-operation these abilities may be used to the advantage of all the churches, large and small.

X. IT USES THE GREATEST PROPORTION OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE, YET SO DIRECTS IT THAT IT IS EFFICIENT.

With volunteer evangelists, volunteer teachers, volunteer or lay preachers, volunteer singers, volunteer helpers and leaders, Group Evangelism accomplishes its work. The danger of misguided efforts by the inexperienced is avoided by the fact that in these efforts the gospel-band workers and others have the constant counsel and guidance of their minister and officers. With this guidance their abilities are brought into play and yet directed so as to be safe and valuable.

XI. GROUP EVANGELISM IS FINANCIALLY EFFICIENT BEYOND ANY OTHER POSSIBLE METHOD.

This has also been tested. The six hundred ministers referred to, together with the help of their members, planted 151 new churches, reopened for regular work 252 closed churches, provided for the future of the work, held meetings for 107 weak or struggling

(but not closed) churches, added 9,358 members to these churches, and established 136 outpost Bible schools or preaching-points that are not yet ready to become churches. All this was done at no cost to any fund. Such expense as was involved was raised in the fields where the work was done. Thus a task was done that would have cost a vast sum of money had it been paid for, and could not have been done except the service had been contributed, because neither the men nor the money were available. That which accomplishes so great a work at no cost is financially efficient. There is no overhead and no waste and no waiting to assemble funds.

XII. IT TAKES CARE OF THE CONVERTS AND THE NEW CHURCH AFTER THE REVIVAL.

In the Group Evangelism revival meeting, there is a permanency because the forces that planned and conducted the meeting to plant the new church are wedded to it in personal interest by the very fact that it is their enterprise and creation. Being near by, interested and committed to the enterprise, there is but the remotest possibility of a suddenly discontinued interest that would leave the new church to languish. There is also the possibility that the gospel faithfully preached and converts soundly made will have within them the springs of life that will carry the work on without outside supervision.

STUDY HELPS.

1. Review the definitions of "evangelism" and "Group Evangelism."

2. What is our approximate force of preachers and elders?

3. In what way does Group Evangelism make a direct contribution to our efforts in reaching new points?

4. How long would it take to open all closed churches if all living churches and ministers should participate?

5. Give the results of tests as to contributed service in church planting and reopening.

6. Where alone can sufficient evangelists be found to reach the thousands of unreached communities?

7. In what way does it help solve the problem of finding a ministry for the smaller churches?

8. In what way does Group Evangelism help in the matter of protecting the smaller churches against exploitation by unworthy men?

9. What effect does Group Evangelism work have on the participating churches?

10. In what other ways does it help in the problems of the needy churches?

11. What can you say of the latent or unused Christian power in the average congregation?

12. What advantage is group co-operation among the ministers?

13. How is volunteer service made efficient?

LESSON IV.

WHERE GROUP EVANGELISM CAN FUNCTION

Lesson: Jas. 2:14-20.
Text: 1 John 3:18.

AGAIN let the definitions of "evangelism" and "Group Evangelism" be recalled. Especially recall that Group Evangelism is based on directly contributed *service,* and that this service consists, not only in the conduct of revival meetings, but in all the forms and phases of gospel work. Let it be understood that the gospel band or group of young people that goes out to conduct a Bible school in a schoolhouse or a communion service in a closed or struggling church is practicing Group Evangelism just as much as the minister who goes out to conduct a revival meeting. Keeping these things in mind will make the following points all the clearer:

I. There Is No Place Too Small.

Some may think that only the strong or wealthy or well-equipped church can practice Group Evangelism. This is the first of all errors to be dispelled. There is no place too small or weak. First of all, any church that is fortunate enough to have one of the precious five thousand ministers should remember

that as sure as one church has a minister, there is another Christian Church that has not a minister that day. This is inevitable since there are already ten thousand churches and five thousand ministers.

Second, it should be understood that as Christians we have no right to be selfish or indifferent to the needs of other places. Five thousand churches of Christ have no earthly or heavenly right to usurp the entire services of the ministers when that means that other churches of Christ must therefore die. Even the smallest church that is fortunate enough to have a minister owes it to the less fortunate to share at least a bit of that minister's time and preaching ability with that place that is without a preacher of the simple gospel.

It should also be remembered that this contribution of interest and service applies, not alone to the ministers, but to the elders next. If a man is worthy to be an elder in his home church, he is able to render service as a teacher or helper in some less fortunate place. This contribution of service applies likewise to deacons and teachers in the church, and finally to every member who has had the opportunity to be taught in the Word.

Even that group of Christians that is leaderless, so far as a minister is concerned, can yet practice Group Evangelism if they will, and will be blest and strengthened in so doing. There is no group of Christians that is capable of taking up a collection of money for missionary evangelism but what is also capable of taking up a collection of personal service for the same purpose. As a matter of fact, many

times, the small church or group is nearer to and in closer touch with others who are more needy than they, than is the large, rich church in the well-churched center.

II. THERE IS NO PLACE TOO LARGE.

It would seem that this topic hardly need be discussed, but experience proves it needs at least a word. Some may think that Group Evangelism might apply practically to the small, rural work, and be wholly impractical for the larger center or city work. As a matter of fact, much of the most successful work of this kind that has come to our attention has been done in some of our greatest cities. New York and Chicago both have splendid examples of most successful work of this kind. In fact, the large centers lend more opportunities for the many phases of Group Evangelism work than do the smaller places. The volunteer and gospel bands have done remarkable work in street meetings in Atlanta and other cities.

III. THERE IS NO PLACE TOO NEEDY.

That church or group of Christians that think they must wait until their own home problems are all solved before they begin an aggressive missionary evangelistic work are again mistaken. The very finest example we know of Group Evangelism was done by a small and poor church and done during its own most intense days of struggle. Its officers and members made it a regular yearly practice to support their minister while he devoted at least three weeks of each year to holding a meeting and planting a new church

in some hitherto unentered community. The members soon learned to assist efficiently in this work and to help carry the work on in the new place after the revival meeting ended. They also very soon learned how to carry on the work at home during the minister's absence. The neediest church in the brotherhood will be only enriched by giving interest and help to a yet more needy, because unentered, community.

IV. There Is No Place Too Well Cared For.

The thought in this paragraph seems unnecessary. However, we have many, many times been told that there was no need for Group Evangelism in a given district. We were assured that there were no closed churches and no communities that were worth, or worthy of, being entered. Surveys in some of these same districts have revealed that there is scarcely a place anywhere but what there are fertile, yet neglected, fields and parts of fields. A survey of the actual population in any section anywhere will reveal many, many people entirely untouched by the activities of the Christian churches, regardless of what may have been done hitherto. Seek and you shall readily find opportunities for Christian service. The real gospel laborers have never yet become too abundant in any field.

V. Fields for Group Evangelism Efforts.

Since not only ministers, but all interested Christians, can participate in Group Evangelism work, there are almost numberless fields of effort. Some of these we mention here. There is no attempt to name

them in any particular order of importance, for all are equally important, and the one which may be applicable under any given circumstances will be determined by the local needs and opportunities.

1. The Contributed Revival Meeting in a Ministerless or Closed Church.—There is scarcely a church of Christ anywhere but what may find opportunity close at hand for such a work. There may be difficulties easily found, but the spirit of Group Evangelism surmounts difficulties. In such a meeting the members may have large opportunity to do many things. First of all, they can encourage the minister. They can plan the home services so that there will be gain instead of loss during the absence of the minister. They can go with him in groups as singers, personal workers, teachers, etc., etc.

Again, such a contributed revival may be entirely conducted by members of the church serving as gospel bands. There are many churches now open that have been thus opened by revival efforts conducted entirely by gospel bands. In this case, it is the minister's part to encourage, guide and counsel. The gospel bands of one church in Kansas in one year reopened five closed churches and brought nearly five hundred souls into the churches.

2. The Contributed Revival in a Place Hitherto Unentered.—Unquestionably, there are hundreds of ministers quite as capable of holding pioneer or church-planting revivals in new places as are the evangelists that may eventually reach these places. As has been said before, these places are so numerous and the possible evangelists so few that only by

the Group Evangelism method is there apparent any way to reach any large number of these places. In this work, churches and ministers may pool their strength. While this method should in no case supplant any other efforts that are being made to the same end, yet every church and every minister should give a part of their service, as well as money, to help carry the message to these places that have never heard. The methods of service are the same as in reopening closed churches, discussed above, and include many forms of service.

3. Outpost and Mission Bible Schools.—Here is a form of Group Evangelism in which very large numbers of Christians can participate. These outpost Bible schools should be established both in places where they may eventually grow into churches and in communities where they may never grow into churches. As a people, we need a new baptism of confidence in the gospel and its power. We ought not to be afraid to teach it anywhere and everywhere. These schools may be regularly organized Sunday schools, or may be single classes taught in homes, schoolhouses, empty store buildings, or wherever interested hearers can be assembled. A surprisingly large number of our best churches have grown from such efforts.

4. Outpost Preaching-points.—The fact that a minister is employed by a church is not sufficient ground for his refraining from ever preaching more than twice a week and that only in the one building of the home church. More and more our ministers ought to preach the gospel. More and more we in

the churches ought to make it possible for them to give themselves to preaching. It requires no extra sermon preparation to go out and preach on Sunday afternoon or on week-nights in the place void of Christian preachers. Every church in our brotherhood ought to have from one to half a dozen outpost preaching-points where the minister and the members preach the gospel.

5. **Part-time Churches.**—Many Christian Churches that have but quarter-time or half-time preaching have developed into quarter-time communion and almost "no-time" actual church enterprise. The Bible schools have been allowed to die, prayer-meeting is discontinued, Christian Endeavor is unthought of, evangelism is at a standstill except for the occasional revival. Here is abundant opportunity for volunteers, gospel bands, lay preachers, Bible-school workers, Christian Endeavor organizers, etc., etc.

VI. EVERY PLACE WHERE THE SIMPLE GOSPEL IS UNTAUGHT.

In this lesson we have attempted to familiarize ourselves with some of the places where Group Evangelism can function. We have mentioned but a few. We leave it to the interest and ingenuity of the students to suggest many more fields of effort. In general, in every place where the simple gospel is not being taught, is a field for an actual New Testament evangelist. Recall the definition of "evangelism," and see whether you may be one to whom is the command to "go." "They that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word" (Acts 8:4).

STUDY HELPS.

1. Review the definitions of "evangelism" and "Group Evangelism."

2. Does it require a strong or wealthy congregation to practice Group Evangelism?

3. Is it Christian for part of the churches of Christ to usurp the entire preaching ability of our force of ministers?

4. Have Christians who employ a minister a right to usurp his whole time?

5. Can any one besides the minister contribute a worthy and helpful Group-Evangelism service?

6. Can a ministerless church practice Group Evangelism? How?

7. Can Group Evangelism function in the large or city community? Name advantages and disadvantages.

8. Is there any place so well cared for that it does not yet need the addition of contributed service? If so, what ought the Christians and ministers of that community do?

9. Name at least five fields of Group Evangelism effort.

10. Who can participate in the contributed revival?

11. Name ways by which others than the ministers can help.

12. Discuss the outpost Bible school and preaching-point.

13. How can Group Evangelism assist in the part-time churches?

LESSON V.

WHERE GROUP EVANGELISM FINDS ITS WORKERS AND HOW FINANCE THEM

Lesson: Eph. 4:1-16.
Text: Gal. 6:10.

I. The Number of Laborers Needed in the Lord's Harvest.

FIRST, the student should review some of the facts given in Lesson III. Recall that there are approximately ten thousand churches of Christ and approximately five thousand ministers. Recall that there are easily five thousand places that are centers of population, cities and growing towns where we have never planted the flag of the Restoration, nor have we had one messenger to deliver one message. Recall that for every church that is planted or reopened there are needed gospel bands, elders, teachers and helpers, as well as preachers and leaders to carry on the work. The student may form some estimate of the actual number of laborers needed for the Lord's ripe harvest.

The study of a plan that proposes a practical way of finding these needed laborers becomes an interesting one. It at the same time attacks one of the great problems, around which we have circled for years, to our great loss.

II. WHERE EVANGELISTS MAY BE FOUND.

It has already been suggested that when our people wake to the thought that every gospel preacher is first of all an evangelist, a preacher of the gospel, rather than merely a man hired by a group to cater to their social requirements, we shall have begun to discover where we may find a tremendous force of gospel preaching evangelists.

1. A Program.—When each church arranges its annual plan and program to send its minister for at least three weeks in the year to preach the gospel in a place where it could not and would not otherwise be preached, meantime supporting the minister with his regular salary, then shall we have discovered one of the ways to solve the problem of the needed evangelists. When our elders learn to care for the home services, at least temporarily, and do it efficiently, then again may our ministers be permitted to "go"—"preach."

2. Real Churches of Christ.—For churches that call themselves churches of Christ, this is certainly more nearly according to the spirit and the letter of the New Testament than the present unholy scramble between stronger and weaker churches of Christ to see which may secure one of the five thousand preachers. This competition is particularly wrong when it is remembered that the churches that are stronger have the advantage, and that in such a procedure the weaker must go down in the competition. Why should not the church that is fortunate enough to secure one of these ministers be unselfish enough and Christian

enough to share that minister as an evangelist for at least three weeks in the year?

3. **The Australian Plan.**—In our Australian churches, the minister is employed with the understanding that he is an evangelist. When Sunday morning comes the elders and helpers in charge of the communion service make that service the center and feature of the morning hour and do not expect the minister to be present. He is expected to go to some other place and evangelize. At the Lord's table, with the elders, are seated young men of the congregation, in training for later service as elders. These young men read the Scriptures and in other ways assist the elders to conduct a communion service that preaches the message with power.

When the time comes for the evening service, the employed minister is expected to be in his home pulpit as evangelist for the home congregation. This again is a suggestion of one of the ways by which the needed evangelists can be found.

4. **Gospel Bands and Lay Evangelists.**—By actual test and experience, it has been found that there are many members of our churches that can not only fill pulpits for regular services, but who, when working in teams or bands, can conduct most successful revival meetings in the outlying and neglected places. If one congregation, through five gospel bands, last year conducted five revival meetings in as many dead churches and brought into these churches near five hundred members, what might be done if this means of evangelism were fostered and encouraged in all our stronger churches?

III. WHERE ABUNDANT LABORERS ARE AVAILABLE.

Long ago the Lord said: "Truly the harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few." We are continually saying the same thing, but there is one very marked difference which we should all note. When the Lord said that, there was a whole world untouched, and the whole force of laborers consisted of the few disciples.

1. **The Facts of To-day.**—We yet say it in the face of the fact that we do have a force of five thousand evangelists, thirty thousand elders, tens of thousands of deacons and teachers, and a million and a quarter of plain Christians. It is among these thousands that the laborers are to be found, if they are to be found at all. It is among these thousands that Group Evangelism would find, and is finding, the laborers for the Lord's harvest.

2. **The Laborers Are Not Few, They Are Abundant.**—A few of us, professional preachers, have attempted to do the whole task when, as a matter of fact, we never can do it. Even though there are ten thousand churches and only five thousand paid ministers, yet there is absolutely no excuse for any closed church of Christ next Sunday, when we remember that we have thirty thousand elders.

The laborers are abundant. They have not been enrolled. In fact, most of the potential laborers are content to allow their fathers in the gospel to go on supporting them through long lives of gospel indolence. This has become so general that most of them have come to believe this to be their natural Christian right.

However, experience has shown that every congregation contains many who, when apprised of the need and shown a practical way to Christian service, will promptly respond and go into immediate training for actual Christian evangelistic work. The methods of arousing, enrolling and training these volunteers will be treated in a subsequent lesson.

IV. WHERE MINISTERS MAY BE FOUND.

This has already been partially treated in a preceding paragraph, wherein it was suggested that churches of Christ can, if they will, practice ordinary brotherly kindness by at times sharing with the less fortunate. There are other sources.

1. **Impractical Solutions.**—Some fear entering into new fields because of the apparent tremendous shortage of ministers for the churches already existing. There are two possible suggestions. One is to allow the number of churches to die down until the supply of ministers is equal to the then existing needs. The other is to find some practical way to get a ministry to the needy churches. The latter only appeals to Group Evangelism. Where are these ministers to be found?

2. **The Only Source.**—If found at all, they must be found within the membership of the churches of Christ. If made at all, they must be made out of the ordinary material that is to be found within our membership. It should here again be recalled that the plea we are set to preach is a simple plea that the ordinary man can understand and that the average man can teach.

3. **Abundance of Ability.**—There are thousands of college and high-school graduates; thousands upon thousands who are cultured and fill places of honor and responsibility in law, teaching, and all the responsible walks of life. By actual test it has been found that there are many indeed who have not had college training who are yet of highest Christian character, are well versed in the gospel, and speak with readiness. Among the volunteers now enrolled are farmers, railroad men, shopmen, doctors, teachers and business men.

Among these are thousands of elders who know how to preside with grace at the communion table and teach large adult classes with ability and eloquence. Many of these can teach and preach the gospel with quite as much eloquence as the average minister. When the minister has held a meeting and started or reopened a church, he can, and should, have some of these members trained and ready to go to minister to the newly opened gospel station.

4. **Evangelism Creates Recruits.**—Let us remember that there is another source of gospel ministers that has been overlooked. If we should discontinue forward evangelism, waiting for the ministerial supply to catch up, we should probably find that the supply of ministers would shrivel in equal proportion to the decrease in churches. It is only a fervent evangelism that begets preachers. Experience leads us to believe that never will a new church of Christ be planted in the spirit of fervent evangelism but what it will, on the average, enroll at least one *bona-fide* life recruit for the ministry. The heroic yet appeals to the Ameri-

can young men more than money, all modern suggestions to the contrary notwithstanding.

V. WHERE TRAINED LEADERS MAY BE FOUND.

1. **What We Mean by Trained Leaders.**—We believe it worth while to make a distinction. By trained leaders we do not necessarily mean men trained in the highest and final technicalities of philosophy, comparative religions, sociology, hermeneutics, and the theories of soul-saving, but rather men of God who are experienced in meeting and dealing with men and in the performance of ordinary church activities.

2. **Many Already Taught.**—There are many men and women who have been taught by their ministers for years in the things of the gospel and church administration. If a bit of special or added training is needed, that can be readily supplied. Leaders, trained leaders in abundance, can be found in the bosom of the church if they are only called for and shown the way.

VI. WHERE TEACHERS MAY BE FOUND.

With all the work comprehended in Group Evangelism, there appears a large need for teachers as well as preachers. The question presents itself as to where these teachers may be found, since even in the best organized Bible schools there is the perennial problem of "never enough teachers."

1. **Duplicating Service.**—Why not duplicate the service of those already teaching? Many a teacher is made a better teacher by engaging in mission teaching in addition to his regular class. A new life and a new zest are added.

2. **Sharing with the Needy.**—Assign some of the best teachers to the outpost work and mission work even in the face of apparent shortage. If these teachers should have died or moved away, their places would have been filled by developing new material. The places will inevitably be filled. In fact, this is a good way to force the situation of putting to work and developing some of the latent and undiscovered talent that so seriously needs to be put to work.

VII. HOW THE WORK IS FINANCED.

A paragraph is all too brief to discuss such an important matter. All Christian work should be sensibly financed. There is no righteousness in disregarding financial honesty. However, light is thrown on the subject when it is remembered that we are discussing Group Evangelism. Group Evangelism is the evangelism of contributed service. Service contributed and enterprise engaged in, never yet failed to generate interest. When there is a real interest there is seldom a failure to find ways to finance the enterprise. In addition to all this, it must be remembered that Group Evangelism enterprises are conducted, for the most part, in places where no work was being done and where no money was being raised. The field is therefore open and unexploited. Actual experience has proven that the cost of the enterprise outside of the contributed service can always be raised in the field where the service is rendered. If somewhat more is needed, it is readily contributed by those whose interest has been aroused in the home base. Group Evangelism practically finances itself.

STUDY HELPS.

1. Give a personal estimate of the number of added laborers that would be needed to give the plea to America alone.

2. Name two sources from which evangelists may be found.

3. Describe the Australian plan.

4. Name two or three advantages in this plan.

5. Can gospel bands actually evangelize?

6. Contrast the condition as to number of laborers in the Lord's time and in the churches of Christ to-day.

7. Why are the laborers few to-day?

8. Name three sources of supply for ministers for weaker churches.

9. What is the surest means of recruiting the ministry?

10. What is meant by a trained leader?

11. Where may many such be found?

12. Discuss means of financing Group Evangelism enterprises.

LESSON VI.

HOW GROUP EVANGELISM WORK IS ACCOMPLISHED

Lesson: Rev. 3:14-22.
Text: Rev. 3:22.

I. A New Conscience to Be Created.

IF our students have followed and digested the previous lessons, they have learned a new and very important definition of evangelism. They have learned what Group Evangelism is, what it accomplishes when applied, why it is seriously needed, where it can function, and where it is to find the laborers.

1. **Difficulties to Be Overcome.**—There remains the practical question, "How can ordinary church-members be induced to take up and prosecute such a work?" Immediately the minister or leader begins to measure this mighty vision and accomplishment by former experiences with selfishness, lassitude, indifference, incompetence, and the ever-present need for enough real leaders, teachers and workers to do the work that so urgently calls for doing in the home congregation.

It should be promptly admitted that to accomplish the work of Group Evangelism the very first

step is the creation of a new vision and a new conscience among both the ministers and the members. It has been found by many and varied experiments and experiences that the present attitude is a result. It has also been found that to create an entirely new vision and conscience is not so difficult as might at first appear.

2. **Illustrating the Need for a New Conscience.**—To make clear an approach to a new vision and a new conscience, we give the following illustration based on an entirely supposititious case, but entirely true to actual conditions as they exist. Suppose that you are the minister at Center Town, the county-seat. It is the Lord's Day morning, and the service in the church of Christ, of which you are the minister, is just drawing to a close. The church is called a church of Christ; the members present call themselves Christians only. The communion service has just been observed, and the people are ready for the benediction.

The minister steps to the front, and says: "Just a moment, brethren; before you go home there is a little story I want to tell you. Just eight blocks from the church there is a family consisting of a father, mother, son and daughter. They are members of this congregation, having come in two years ago in a revival meeting. They have not attended as we think they ought, nor have they contributed nor worked as we think they ought, but they are dying, and they are our brethren. In fact, they are starving to death. There has not been a bite of bread in that home in a week. What shall we do about it?"

There is not a member of any Christian church anywhere that would be so stingy, or so mean, or so indifferent, or so thoughtless, that he would think of merely sending a letter of condolence. Every member would throw aside all formality, and even the meanest would be quick to get up and out and to the grocery and get to that home with milk and bread. We have so far developed as Christians that we have developed a conscience as between individuals and for purely physical wants.

Suppose, however, that the minister has this story to tell: "Brethren, just before you go home, there is a story I want to tell you. Just eight miles from here there is a church of Christ dying. It is starving to death. There has not been a crumb of gospel bread in that house in two years. What shall we do about it?"

Judging by our former attitudes, most of our members would simply sigh, and say: "Isn't that too bad that old Antioch is gone?" They forget that old Antioch is a church of Christ and that a church of Christ is the body of Christ. They forget that even though the starving family died, yet they are only four and that the world's salvation would not depend on them. They forget that when a church of Christ dies, the light of Christ, the only hope of men, goes out in that community. What must be developed among us is a conscience as between churches of Christ, so that Christians may not feel that it is permitted for them to surfeit on gospel bread while another starves to death. Unselfishness, the first of Christian virtues, is here involved.

II. A NEW VISION TO BE CREATED.

1. **Use Concrete Examples.**—Vision comes more easily than would at first appear. While vision is supposed to be, in a way, the opposite of concrete things, yet vision can be created best and easiest by the use of concrete examples. The old thought, the old vision, can be changed. The thought, sentiment and action of a man are molded quicker by the actual view of one starving child than by abstract lectures about a million starving children. Ministers who would create a new vision among their people should keep this in mind.

2. **The Survey.**—From the national office, we have continually given the people specific examples of real, rather than visionary, needs. In a recent Group Evangelism article we gave the picture and story of a closed church. In one week, ten different offers were made to undertake that work. Yet that same work stands ready for the doing in practically five thousand communities. Begin by arousing a direct interest in a specific task. If the interest and whole time of the minister and local leaders have been completely absorbed in the home church so that they feel that there are no appealing needs near them, we suggest that a group be assigned to take a survey of the county or city round about. Whole fertile areas, untouched, or now left fallow, will be discovered. Only those who were looking for gold have found it. Others stumbled over rich ore and saw only common waste rock. How hard for some to see that the unsaved are everywhere.

III. CREATION OF FEELING OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY.

1. Personal Responsibility.—We contribute to help support our local minister, which is right. But we have used this contribution to purchase immunity for ourselves from all Christian work. We have hired a man. We supinely drift into the error and paralyzing sin of thinking that that ends our personal responsibility as Christians in the matter of making Christ's gospel known to those who know it not.

2. Congregational Responsibility.—We take a collection and have drifted into the notion that that ends our missionary responsibility. We have purchased immunity for ourselves and our minister. We have made an offering, and, therefore, delegated the saving of the world to some one who has relieved us of all responsibility. The world can never be saved in that way, as the foregoing lessons and two thousand years of history have abundantly demonstrated. Here again review the definition of evangelism, and see whether this sentiment is in keeping with the definition of New Testament evangelism.

These three things—the creation of a new conscience, a new vision and a new feeling of personal responsibility—are the essential beginnings of Group Evangelism work.

IV. A NEW APPRECIATION OF THE PLEA.

There is one more preliminary to the beginning of a Group Evangelism work. We have mentioned the creation of a new conscience as between churches of

Christ, a new vision, and a feeling of personal responsibility. The fourth essential is a new appreciation of the plea. Thinking back over our history, it is quite apparent that just two things have fired and inspired our people to all their greatest undertakings. These two are, first, a passionate love of and zeal for the plea for the restoration of New Testament Christianity, and, second, a great and difficult task laid out to challenge them. In the matter of the "vision" we have mentioned the "task," but to that must be added a renewed appreciation of the gospel plea which will lead men to want to see it made known to all others everywhere. These things we have mentioned are essential and are the very first practical approaches to a real practical work. When we love the plea enough and want to see it propagated, earnestly enough, we shall find ways or make them.

V. MEANS FOR ACCOMPLISHING THE ABOVE.

1. **Personal Example.**—A way to accomplish the above is by example on the part of the minister and then the officers. People may seem deaf to a theory, but they will notice an example. Let the minister with his own strength and with his own initiative find and start at least the small beginning of a Group Evangelism work. Let him get his own heart on fire with the new service, and other hearts will eventually glow.

2. **Assign Tasks.**—The survey is a splendid way to arouse a new vision and a wider interest. Take along those who ought to be interested, but are not. Assign them specific tasks. Show them examples of

the needs and possibilities. Use them as helpers in a mission Bible school or contributed revival. Doing warms the heart.

3. A Map.—Place the information gained in a survey, on a wall-chart and call attention to it again and again. Teach them that a church of Christ is responsible, not alone for its own small circle and territory, but for all the borders out to where these borders touch those of the next church of Christ.

VI. SPECIFIC WORK THAT HELPS.

1. Call for Volunteers.—When vision and incentive have been created, ask for a response to a definite call for volunteers to go into training for service. Show them that one of the first things they can do is to prepare to conduct the services at the home church while the minister carries the message into the places that have not the message. Here is the first beginning of relieving our five thousand ministers for some New Testament evangelism.

2. Relieving the Minister.—Volunteers in the beginning help relieve the minister of many of the ordinary and unimportant tasks that have usurped his time almost to the exclusion of preaching. Preachers ought to preach the gospel. Group Evangelism would help to send the plea to thousands who have not heard it, by thus freeing the minister and making him an evangelist for at least a period each year.

3. Increased Ability.—This method reveals another way that is somewhat overlooked. It increases the evangelistic abilities of the ministers. Many, many of our ministers have never tried to conduct a meeting.

They can not because they think they can not. The distinction between pastors and evangelists has been far overemphasized. If a preacher is not an evangelist, then what is he? The false and circumscribed notion of evangelism must be done away. In the highways and the byways is a good place to practice. Practice develops ability. The glorified "big meeting" has done much to discourage the general practice of evangelism on the part of many ministers. There is nothing an ordinary minister needs as an evangelist but what he has, or can attain.

When we remember that ordinary preaching of the gospel by an ordinary minister, when done in a place where the gospel has not been preached, becomes not only evangelism, but missionary evangelism, it will appear that evangelism is no impossible task for any man who can preach or teach the word of God plainly.

VII. INCREASE BY MANY TIMES THE NUMBER OF ACTUAL EXPERT HELPERS.

There is no reason why helpers in evangelism can not be developed, in any congregation, who are quite as expert as the average helper carried by the professional evangelist. As Group Evangelism enlists large numbers in the actual work, this itself develops actual ability among large numbers of the members. We learn to do by doing. In fact, one who learns in that way is more expert than one who has only theory. Who would dare to try to measure the unconsecrated abilities dormant in the churches?

VIII. SUMMARY OF MEANS BY WHICH GROUP EVANGELISM WORK IS DONE.

1. Creation of Vision.—Creation of new vision, conscience and incentive among ministers and members, and a new zeal for the plea.

2. More Comprehensive View.—Creation of a more comprehensive view of New Testament evangelism.

3. Training of Members.—Actual enlistment and training of numbers of members in each congregation to be able to perform various tasks that have to do with the work of evangelism, especially in outlying points.

4. Loaning of Minister.—Pledging of as nearly as possible every church to write into its yearly program the loaning of their minister, with salary paid, for a specified portion of time each year, to places in which the plea could not otherwise be preached.

5. Contributed Service.—Pledging of as nearly as possible every minister and evangelist to make it a part of his yearly program to contribute service to a place that would not otherwise hear the plea.

6. Members Conduct Local Services.—The use of trained local members to conduct the home service in the minister's absence, and to take over much of the regular detail work of the church through all the year so that the preacher may do more actual preaching.

7. Outside Efforts.—The use of trained members to assist the minister in outside efforts.

8. Outpost Points.—Use of church officers, teachers and other trained members to open and conduct

services and Bible schools in many outpost points, closed churches, unentered places, etc., etc.

It is by these practical and Scriptural, but simple, ways that the wonderful results have been attained and that untold progress can be made as soon as the vision and practice become general.

STUDY HELPS.

1. What are the very first steps in preparing to do a Group Evangelism work in a local congregation?

2. Mention ways by which you would proceed to create a new conscience and vision.

3. How would you account for the rather general attitude of indifference shown by one congregation toward the interests of a sister congregation?

4. How would you account for a lack of feeling of personal responsibility among the members of the average congregation?

5. How would you proceed to begin to create a feeling of personal responsibility for the missionary evangelistic task?

6. Mention some specific tasks that can be done by a minister and his members which will help in carrying the gospel message to the needy places.

7. Summarize the procedures and plans by which Group Evangelism work can be begun and carried on in any field.

8. Give your personal estimate of what the results would be in the whole brotherhood if Group Evangelism should be universally practiced.

LESSON VII.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

Lesson: Acts 11:19-26.
Text: Mark 16:15.

IN contemplating any program that is so general in its application and so great in its possibilities as is Group Evangelism, there are certain difficulties and objections which will suggest themselves, and which each one will no doubt meet. We have thought it wise, therefore, at this juncture, to devote one lesson to these apparent difficulties and objections so that the student may be prepared to meet them.

I. Why Plant and Reopen Churches of Christ When We Do Not Have Nearly Enough Preachers in Practice or Prospect for the Churches We Now Have?

1. Evangelism Begets Preachers.—Evangelism is not only a means of producing more churches, but is by far the best means for producing more preachers. The incentive to preach and the decision to preach come from a heart set on fire by conviction. Such conviction comes from hearing the Word proclaimed with earnestness out of a heart converted and convicted.

Colleges do not make preachers; they can train those who are already filled with a desire to preach the gospel. It is evangelism that begets preachers. If we should stop forward and aggressive promotion of the plea through evangelism and missionary evangelism, waiting for the preacher supply to catch up, we should become a disappearing brotherhood indeed. Preach the Word in season, out of season (2 Tim. 4:2).

2. The Desire to Preach.—Actual experience proves, with all theories to the contrary notwithstanding, that it is not the financial problem that determines the decision to preach the gospel. Heroism yet lives. One thoroughly filled with the gospel message and a desire to preach it will not allow the financial side to prevent him.

3. Finding the Laborers.—It should be remembered that the very task to which "Group Evangelism" is dedicated is the problem of "finding the laborers." In every district where it has been tried this problem has been met and solved. There are no preacherless churches in the districts where Group Evangelism has been earnestly tried.

II. THIS IS A TREMENDOUS UNDERTAKING, AND ONLY ADDS AN ADDITIONAL PIECE OF MACHINERY TO BE FINANCED BY AN OVERBURDENED PEOPLE.

1. Contributed Service.—First let it be remembered that Group Evangelism is the one force in the field that specializes in the promotion of *contributed service.* If it were a piece of machinery that can produce the tremendous results briefly reported in Lesson III., it would be a well-paying investment.

2. No Machinery to Be Financed.—Next, it should be remembered that there is no machinery to be financed, as the one promotional office privately finances itself, and never has solicited nor used a penny of contributed money for the support of machinery or promotion.

3. Actually Finances Itself.—Both in theory and practice the actual work of Group Evangelism, as done on the field and as portrayed in foregoing lessons, actually finances itself by bringing forth such money as needed from sources hitherto untapped. The new interest aroused and the new fields entered produce the necessary expense of the Group Evangelism meetings.

III. IS SUCH A WORK NOT IN OPPOSITION TO OUR OLDER-ESTABLISHED AGENCIES?

It is not. Any movement that fosters the preaching of the gospel, converts people to Christ, multiplies preaching-points, teaches the New Testament plea in its simplicity, and inspires men to teach and preach it, is, by these very facts, the very foundation and beginning of all proper efforts and agencies of a missionary nature. Group Evangelism is entirely constructive, and relies almost entirely for its sources of effort on energies now unused.

Practically all agencies are primarily engaged in raising funds or contributions of money to employ paid workers for various fields of enterprise. Group Evangelism specializes in arousing, enrolling, training and guiding contributions of service. This, then, is a work that is different.

It is quite self-evident, therefore, that the work of Group Evangelism is only helpful, and never hurtful, to any agency that is dedicated to the promotion of the gospel of the New Testament.

IV. IS IT NOT MORE NEEDFUL TO CULTIVATE HIGHER STANDARDS OF CHRISTIAN LIFE AND MISSIONARY LIBERALITY AMONG THE CHURCHES AND PEOPLE WE NOW HAVE THAN TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS AND CHURCHES?

As is perfectly evident in the portrayal of Group Evangelism in the foregoing lessons, there is nothing in Group Evangelism that would in any way decrease present efforts toward a holier life. In fact, it is the presumption that the earnest preaching of the gospel is the divine method of promoting a holier life.

Group Evangelism starts at the bottom with missionary principles and purposes. Its whole purpose is to arouse every minister and every member to missionary activity, to a personal interest in spreading the gospel message, an interest which will express itself in personal service rather than stopping with a mere monetary contribution.

V. WILL GROUP EVANGELISM NOT RESULT IN ORGANIZING A LOT OF SMALL CHURCHES THAT CAN NOT BE CARED FOR, AND THAT WILL, THEREFORE, PROBABLY DIE?

1. Some May Die.—Perhaps some may die. If, however, they teach the gospel, and convert some to Christ while they are living, there will be that much clear gain and no loss.

2. Life Depends upon the Faith of a Few.—Why presume that they will die? Most, if not all, of our strong churches started in a small way. Most of the strong churches have been builded up by the unflinching faith of a few people in each case. This principle has never yet changed.

The life of a church depends more largely upon the fixed and positive faith of the few, or many, who make up the membership than upon outside help or supervision. Positive New Testament teaching will produce just such a faith.

3. Proper Nurturing.—In addition to all this, it will have been noticed that the Group Evangelism plan provides not only for the planting of the church, but for a proper nurturing in all things of the gospel. The very plan of Group Evangelism and the psychology of it practically guarantee the constant future assistance that may appear advisable.

4. Gospel Able to Live and Do Its Work.—Finally, a careful study of New Testament evangelism as revealed in the New Testament will reveal that a great deal of reliance and confidence is placed in the gospel being able to live and do its work when planted in the hearts of men. Too little confidence can easily be shown in the power of the gospel to thus live and grow, and supervision can easily be overdone.

VI. IS IT NOT BOTH FOOLISH AND WRONG TO ORGANIZE MORE CHURCHES WHEN WE HAVE SO MANY PREACHERLESS AND DYING CHURCHES?

1. The "Bugaboo" of Dying Churches.—The "bugaboo" of dying churches has been considerably

overworked. Some conspicuous examples have been heralded until the impression is given that every church which does not measure up to certain recent standards is dead. In most instances of so-called "dying or dead churches" there are a few faithful brethren left who are earnestly praying for the preacher who will listen to the Macedonian call to come over and help them with a few gospel sermons. Much experimentation has proven that in almost every instance there is a surprising and hearty response to such treatment of the case. The gospel gives life, the gospel restores life.

2. Organizations Giving Attention to This Problem.—Counting State, national and district organizations, we have some hundreds of organizations that are giving attention to the dying-church problem.

3. Group Evangelism a Solution.—Group Evangelism is as much interested in reviving churches, where advisable, as in planting, and its record to date has been in the percentage of two churches revived to each new church planted. Group Evangelism is one of the best methods on earth for the solution of the dying-church problem.

4. Other Possibilities.—Suppose, yet, some churches will die. But what of it? So will some people die, but that is no reason why there should be no more people born. If the birth-rate does not exceed the death-rate, depopulation will ensue. This had been true among our churches for some years. Also, perhaps a young, energetic, new church is worth more than an old and stranded work that has served its day.

VII. WILL NOT THE WHOLESALE RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS BRING IN MANY WHO ARE UNSUITED FOR SERVICE, AND LOWER THE STANDARD OF THE MINISTRY?

1. The Work Serves as a Sifter.—Undoubtedly there will be some volunteers who have not much but enthusiasm and the "joining habit." This is true in the matter of evangelism, yet the Lord said to spread the net. This same is apparently true when recruiting for the kingdom in general, yet the Lord said not to sow sparingly.

The Group Evangelism work and service is of such nature that almost every earnest Christian can be used some place in the work, and the work itself serves as a sifter to sift the volunteers. As a matter of fact, the Lord is about the only one that is wise enough to determine whom He can best use for great work. Some of our very greatest preachers were most unlikely-looking prospects in the beginning, and some who seemed most promising have been most disappointing.

2. Standard Will Actually Be Raised.—As to lowering the standards of the ministry, perhaps that would depend on who makes the standards and what the standards are. If the standards are those of New Testament love, loyalty and service, we do not believe the standards will be lowered by such recruitment and service as the Group Evangelism recruitment program proposes. In fact, we believe the standards of efficiency in preaching the gospel will actually be raised.

STUDY HELPS.

1. How would you answer the objection to entering new communities with the plea in the face of the shortage of ministers?

2. What, in your judgment, would make the strongest appeal to a young man to volunteer?

3. In your judgment, is the financial element the only explanation for the shortage of ministers?

4. Does Group Evangelism add to the promotional machinery to be supported by contributions?

5. How is the promotional office of Group Evangelism financed?

6. What can you say of the financing of the Group Evangelism enterprises conducted by ministers?

7. Why is the amount of finance needed for Group Evangelism work very much reduced?

8. Is the Group Evangelism work a work in opposition to other agencies?

9. Does Group Evangelism help all other agencies and forces?

10. In what particular feature is Group Evangelism unique?

11. How would you answer the criticism that it is more important to cultivate higher standards of Christian life and missionary giving, rather than to increase the number of churches and members?

12. Should no more churches be planted because there are dying churches? Why?

13. What can you say of the dangers and safeguards of the generous recruitment of volunteers for training?

LESSON VIII.

HOW TO SECURE VOLUNTEERS AND RECRUITS FOR TRAINING AND SERVICE

Lesson: 1 Thess. 1:6-10.
Text: Rom. 15:1.

I. Purpose of This Lesson.

IT has certainly been made apparent that the Group Evangelism work comprehends the enrolling of a large number of members, as well as ministers, in the program of work. It is the purpose of this lesson to discuss the reasons for former failures to enlist an adequate force, together with the consequent shortage, and to suggest, not the only way, but one way, by which an abundance of workers may be enrolled. In a former lesson we have discussed the sources from which the laborers may be secured. In this lesson we only deal with a suggested and tried way of securing them. In a following lesson we shall deal with the matter of training and the direction of the workers.

II. Reasons for Failure to Have Enrolled an Adequate Force.

Outside of individual efforts and a few spasmodic efforts, there has been no systematic or sustained

effort in the churches to solve the problem of recruits for the ministry.

When we would enroll recruits for the church membership itself, do we not gather hundreds into the Bible school and teach them patiently for years, and from childhood up, with the definite expectation and continuous suggestion that they obey the gospel? Why not attack the problem of the need for recruits for the ministry of the Word in the same serious, systematic and sensible way?

When we would enroll recruits for the church itself, do we not advertise for months, hold prayer-meetings for weeks, employ an expert, and then hold forth night after night for weeks, teaching, inviting, urging, appealing with every power of persuasion, both public and private? We do, and we get results, for we have systematically worked for a definite end and purpose. Why not every church in the brotherhood, this year, and every year, as carefully prepare for a volunteer or recruitment Sunday, as we prepare for a revival meeting? This failure of ours is at least one explanation of the shortage of laborers for the Lord's harvest. It has been left to chance too long.

III. THINGS TO DO TO PREPARE FOR A RECRUITMENT PROGRAM.

1. Call Meeting of Church Officers.—Call the church officers together and lay the whole tremendous need before them. Read them the story of the deacon Philip, Acts 8. Give them the figures which you have learned in these lessons as to the need for

more laborers and the consequent dying churches and unentered fertile fields.

2. Present the Work to the Young People.—Call all the young people of the Christian Endeavor and the young people's classes, including the Intermediate age, to meet with the minister or elders, and lay these startling facts and figures upon their minds and hearts. If possible, take all of them out and show them an example of a closed church.

In a joint meeting of all the workers mentioned, propose a "Young People's Day," which shall have as one purpose the call for volunteers.

3. Have Definite Aims.—Suggest definite ends and aims for the day which shall include the reaching, on that day, of the largest possible number of young people for the church, and the securing of volunteers for the work of the Lord.

Get every person present, there and then, to write down the names of all young people in the Bible school, or out, that they know, who are not members of the church and to whom an invitation may be sent to attend the program on "Young People's Day." Get each one to agree to extend a personal invitation to those listed, to attend the services that particular day.

4. Appoint Committees.—Appoint an invitation committee to write and mail special invitations to every young person whose name has been listed.

Appoint a special music committee of the young people to have full charge of the entire musical program for the day, including both vocal and instrumental music.

Appoint a personal work committee to enlist all young people who, by any possibility, might be brought to obey the gospel on the Young People's Day, and to do definite personal work to that end.

Appoint a volunteer committee, with a chairman who will plan the work and see that the matter of enlistment for the ministry and other phases of work is definitely talked among the young people. Work with this committee.

5. **Prepare Program.**—Secure from three to five who, with help, will prepare to help the minister preach the sermon on the special day. Choose some such subject as "The World's Need for the Gospel." Call them together, and help divide the topic into divisions which will fit together to make one completed discourse. Assign one division to each and help them, if necessary, to outline their division.

6. **Advertise the Day.**—Thoroughly advertise the day, and call attention to it again and again in the regular services, always mentioning the work of the personal-work and enlistment committees.

IV. THE VOLUNTEER-DAY PROGRAM.

If proper preparation has been made, and earnest work done in preparing the minds and expectations of the people for results, there will be surprising results. We give here a skeleton or suggested program, which may be changed to suit local needs:

1. **Special Music.**—Special instrumental or vocal music by the young people.

2. **Hymns.**—Hymns, led, if possible, by some of the young men.

3. **Prayers.**—Prayers by a number of the young people, especially keeping in mind the call of the day to obey the gospel and to volunteer for training and service.

4. **Offertory.**—Music and offertory.

5. **Scripture Lessons.**—Reading of the Scripture lesson by one of the young people. This can well be committed and given from memory.

6. **Special music.**

7. **Sermon.**—Sermon, introduced in five-minutes talk by the minister, followed by four or five of the young people, and five-minutes closing appeal for obedience to the gospel by the minister.

8. **Invitation Hymn.**—Invitation hymn, "Just as I Am."

9. **Presentation of Needs.**—Five-minutes presentation of condensed facts in regard to the needs, nationally and locally, for teachers or preachers of the Word. (Use facts gleaned from these lessons.)

10. **Invitation for Volunteers.**—Conduct the same as an ordinary invitation, but with the exhortation for people who are members of the church to step forward and indicate their willingness to volunteer for training for life and lay service. The elders should be urged to lead in this response. (Song suggested, "I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go."

V. CARE OF THE VOLUNTEERS.

Perhaps the greatest mistake that has been made in most calls for and campaigns for volunteers is that the work has stopped when the volunteers have responded. The work is only begun. They have re-

sponded to your suggestions, and eagerly await your next suggestion. Too many ministers and evangelists have failed to provide the next definite suggestion. We suggest some immediate steps. The training and direction and use of the volunteers will be more thoroughly taken up in a following lesson.

1. **Call a Meeting of Volunteers Immediately.**—Immediately after the invitation, all volunteers should be called to a quiet place apart from the rest, where a short prayer service can be held. Aside from the names and addresses, there should be listed with each name such facts as will help in classification, both for training and for service. The ages, amount of school work done, experience in church work, preference as to kind of service, future intentions and prospects for further education, etc., would be among the things that should be listed on each volunteer's card. (Note.—Any one who wishes to, and will, write us, will be furnished enrollment cards free and made specially for this purpose.)

2. **Organize Volunteers.**—The group, including the young and the older, should be immediately organized into a volunteer band, with a chosen leader. For purposes of organization, together with plans for preliminary training and service, we have prepared a small pamphlet of suggestions which will be furnished free to those requesting it. Further suggestions will be found in another lesson of this series.

3. **Special Feature.**—No special offering should be taken for any purpose on the day set apart as Volunteer Day, unless it be to start a local permanent fund to loan to local young people to assist them

in their education and to be returned and reloaned to others. This is a good feature where practical, and thus gives all a chance to participate. Frequently it is better to make this the special feature of the following Sunday.

VI. CLASSIFICATION OF VOLUNTEERS.

The classes of volunteers called for should be at least three:

1. **Professionally Equipped Men.**—Professional or educationally equipped men such as teachers, lawyers, etc., who will volunteer to preach the gospel and will enter the ministry now.

2. **For Life Service.**—Young men and women of high-school age and up, who will volunteer for life service with the expectation of equipping themselves for such service. It is not necessarily essential that each should be able to determine definitely his or her chosen service at the time of volunteering.

3. **Tentmakers, Gospel Teams.**—Young, old and middle-aged, including church officers, Bible-school teachers, etc., for gospel bands and all kinds of Group Evangelism service. These may expect to continue to support themselves in their chosen work or profession, but agree to try to equip themselves to fill outlying vacant pulpits, do various forms of evangelistic and outpost Bible-school work.

VII. OTHER PLANS OF SECURING VOLUNTEERS.

1. **Group Evangelism Congress.**—The district Group Evangelism congress never fails to secure volunteers in great numbers from all the churches.

2. Conventions.—One good feature of a district or county convention is to have one service which is a carefully prepared and planned volunteer service, conducted by the volunteers.

STUDY HELPS.

1. What is the purpose of this lesson?
2. Account for the former failures to have secured an adequate force of preachers of the plea.
3. Suggest a way to remedy this situation.
4. Mention the features that are important in preparing for a call for volunteers.
5. What is the advantage of having the young people assist largely in the Volunteer Day program?
6. What is the advantage of a special Volunteer Day?
7. Why is it important to make immediate plans for the future guidance, training and work of the volunteers?
8. Mention a few things that should be done immediately after the response to the call for volunteers.
9. What three classes of volunteers should be called for?
10. Mention some other good plans for securing volunteers.

LESSON IX.

ORGANIZATION, TRAINING AND DIRECTION OF THE VOLUNTEERS

Lesson: 2 Tim. 3:10-17.
Text: 2 Tim. 3:16.

I. The Advantage of Organization.

IN beginning this lesson we are presuming that the students have in mind the things that have been said in former lessons on the various phases of Group Evangelism, and especially on the *need* for more laborers and how to secure them.

There have been many volunteers secured in times past by many evangelists and movements. Very probably the weakest part of all that has been done has been in the failure to follow up the work with organization, training and direction. The purpose of this lesson is to make a number of practical suggestions on these phases of the work.

By organization we mean merely the local banding together for mutual encouragement, training and work. If some plan is not adopted where there are a number of volunteers of the different classes in a congregation or a county or a district, there is liable to be very little training or work done. As before suggested, a local organization should be immediately formed. The

very fact of having an organized volunteer band will tend to call them together again and suggest the need for plans for training and plans of work.

II. PLANS OF ORGANIZATION.

May we say, first, that, having faced this need constantly, the Group Evangelism office, working in conjunction with the national office of the Loyal Movement, has worked out a pamphlet which is free for the asking, and which is builded on purpose to answer questions in regard to organization and preliminary training, reading courses, study courses and plans for work? As best we can, we shall give brief suggestions here.

1. The Volunteer Band Leader.—A poor organization of ordinary people with a good leader can do much good and will do no harm. A good organization with good principles, but with a bad leader, becomes a menace. This applies to all organizations everywhere and of every kind. Care should be taken to choose a good band leader. He or she should be one who has the Group Evangelism and gospel-band vision, and appreciates the need for such service. Where there are a number of volunteers in a district, there should be a district band leader with local leaders for the groups in each church that has groups of volunteers. A secretary and treasurer complete the list of necessary officers.

2. Duties of the Leaders.—The general duty of the leader is to keep the good resolution fresh in the mind of the volunteers, help and encourage them in training with the view of having the largest possi-

ble number ready for some form of service at the earliest possible time.

The leader should write a letter to every volunteer once each month. This letter should encourage the volunteers to perseverance and study, should give them news of plans, news of work being done and should make suggestions where needed in regard to study. The leader may well equip himself with a goodly list of the best tracts on the plea and include one of these to each volunteer each month, with the requirement that the contents be mastered and a report made. Tracts on the church, the name, baptism, our plea, etc., are of the kind most helpful. Only one kind of tract should be sent at one time.

The leader should plan for a get-together meeting of all volunteers at least once a year at the district convention or some convenient time and place. Programs can be given by these bands that are a fine feature of such conventions.

The leader should keep book of the reports of all study accomplished and all gospel work done by the volunteers and summarize this report at the district convention. The main duty of the treasurer is to take up a collection and furnish the money for stationery and postage. Ten dollars will equip an average band for a year.

The district leader should encourage the appointment of local band leaders in all churches that have enough volunteers to form a band. The leader should secure and file information as follows in regard to each volunteer: Address, age, occupation, educational training, former experience in church work, present

and future opportunities for further training and preference as to religious work. Where requested, we will furnish cards free for this purpose.

One of the ministers may serve as district band leader, but it is usually much better that one of the volunteers serve as leader. The ministers should render their service in training, teaching and directing.

III. LAWS AND COVENANT OF THE LOYAL VOLUNTEERS.

Wherever desired, a constitution and by-laws may be adopted, but aside from, and in addition to, that, we suggest the adoption and signing by each volunteer of the following laws and covenant of the volunteers. Every volunteer should be required to commit the laws and covenant to memory.

Fourteen laws. A Loyal Volunteer is:

1. Patient—"Suffereth long."
2. Kind—"And is kind."
3. Generous—"Envieth not."
4. Humble—"Not puffed up."
5. Courteous—"Behaveth not unseemly.'
6. Unselfish—"Seeketh not his own."
7. Self-controlled—"Not easily provoked."
8. Pure-minded—"Thinketh no evil."
9. A lover of the good—"Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth."
10. A Loyal Volunteer stands always ready to go at his leader's request for service.
11. A Loyal Volunteer is as ready to release a task when asked as to accept it when sent.
12. A Loyal Volunteer is always loyal to the Christ, the gospel and the church.

13. A Loyal Volunteer ever strives to improve the quality of his service.

14. A Loyal Volunteer counts it a privilege to serve and an honor to suffer for Christ.

COVENANT.

As a member of the Loyal Volunteer Band, I covanant with God and my fellow-members that I will continually strive to fulfill, both in spirit and in letter, the laws of the volunteers.

I will do my utmost to help every one I can to know and obey the Saviour, and to that end I pledge to try to learn His word and to teach it both by word and by example.

Signed.....

IV. TRAINING OF THE VOLUNTEERS.

Training consists of two features—study and service. Both should be begun at the earliest possible time. In the matter of training it should be remembered that the volunteers usually consist of a very mixed group in matter of age, educational equipment and condition in life. Some are life recruits; some are elders, deacons and teachers, who volunteer for lay service and gospel-band service; some are in school; some are through school. However, for most part, their training for actual service has not been so divergent and their needs usually have much in common. All need a good, primary knowledge of the Bible, and the first text is, therefore, the Bible. In general, the minister should teach the class, and to the Bible may be added helps such as can be gotten

from the fine list of tracts that have been produced by our wisest and greatest ministers. Errett, McGarvey, Briney and a host of others have given us their best in these brief tracts.

For help in the matter of preliminary Bible study, we know of nothing that is superior to the first twenty-seven lessons of Moninger's "Training for Service." To this should be added "Training for Personal Evangelism," "Training for Group Evangelism," practice in conducting services in the home church and then in outlying places, practice in reading the Scripture in public at every opportunity, committing of passages and chapters of Scripture, practice in producing and rendering talks on assigned and chosen subjects, and, finally, actual work in outpost Bible schools and closed churches.

After this preliminary training, which may apply to all classes of volunteers, and which all need, then more extended courses may be adopted and the courses varied to suit the different classes of volunteers. Of course, where possible, a good course in a Bible institute or good Bible college is needed for life-work, but we have largely confined these practical suggestions to immediate needs for the immediate task.

V. DIRECTION OF THE WORK OF THE VOLUNTEERS.

The work both can and should be planned, systematized and directed. This may be done by the minister of the church or by the district band leader in conjunction with the minister. Both plans have worked excellently in actual practice. While each

volunteer needs the practice, yet the thought should be constantly kept before all that the work is for the sake of the work, and for the sake of the unsaved and the unreached, and not for the sake of the volunteers. Many churches can be and have been ruined by being used only for practice-stations for amateurs. Too often student preachers look upon churches only as a means to help the student through college and on to a real work. This attitude is exceedingly harmful to the work.

The director of a band of volunteers should have frequent meetings for reports of work done and discussion of all problems met. This applies whether the work is being done singly or by gospel teams.

Every gospel team should have a director or manager. While one member of the team may be the speaker, another the singer, another the organist, etc., yet some one of these should be the director or manager of the team.

VI. RESULTS THAT HAVE BEEN OBTAINED FROM THE WORK OF VOLUNTEERS.

In the past three years volunteers have conducted the services in hundreds of churches during the absence of their ministers, while the minister was conducting a contributed revival. Scores upon scores of churches that were closed have had, not only the services, but the life and activities of the churches, restored through the work of the volunteers alone. Districts that had more closed churches than open churches now have every church open and active. Street meetings have been held in many cities by

the volunteers, and many have been led to Christ. Many scores of outpost Bible schools have been started and are conducted by the volunteers. Somewhat over two thousand of the volunteers and lay workers have now organized as Loyal Volunteers, and are taking advantage of such help and suggestions as the Group Evangelism and Loyal Movement offices can furnish to push their work and training. Home churches have been reinspired and new life has come into the evangelism of the home churches. From among these mixed classes of volunteers there has come a very large number of full-time life recruits that are helping to refill the ranks of the ministry.

STUDY HELPS.

1. What is meant by the organization of the volunteers?
2. What is the advantage of organization?
3. How proceed to organize a local band? What officers are needed?
4. Give the duties of the leader.
5. Give the fourteen laws of the Loyal Volunteers.
6. Repeat the covenant of the Loyal Volunteers.
7. What two features are involved in the training of volunteers?
8. What is the first text to be used?
9. Name a number of good helps.
10. Discuss the directing of the work of volunteers.
11. Enumerate some of the things that have been achieved by volunteers.

LESSON X.

HOW GROUP EVANGELISM WORK CAN BE PROMOTED

Lesson: 2 Tim. 2:1-13.
Text: Tit. 2:1.

I. Introductory Word.

IN Lesson VI. we outlined the beginnings of the promotion of a Group Evangelism work in a church. There it was made plain that the very beginning requires the creation of a new conscience, vision, feeling of personal responsibility and a renewed and intensified passion for the plea.

In this lesson we shall go further into some of the ways that experience has proven best for accomplishing these things. It should be borne in mind that all suggestions made in all these lessons are based on and made strictly out of successful experiments in many fields. No part of these lessons is mere theory. Every suggestion made is based on that which has been thoroughly tried again and again. Incidentally, the purpose of the maintenance of a national office is to lend assistance to local groups in working out these very problems. Ours is a laboratory to develop and discover plans of work and pass them on to others.

II. THE GROUP EVANGELISM CONGRESS.

This being one of the most effective methods for accomplishing the beginning of a Group Evangelism work on a wide scale and throughout an entire district in a concerted way, we give here something upon the subject so that all Group Evangelism students may be familiar with it.

1. General Plan.—First of all, the meeting is always locally promoted. Where there is a group earnestly longing to see the deserted or closed points reopened and opportune new centers entered, a group of leading ministers and laymen is formed to plan for and promote a Group Evangelism congress in a chosen district.

Where solicited, the national office lends its aid in the way of plans, suggestions, publicity, experts to assist on the program, and a fieldman for a time to assist in taking a complete survey of the field. Every church, open and closed, large and small, is visited and familiarized with the work and plans, and definite information is gathered as to the needs and opportunities of every community in the district, including those which do not have churches of Christ.

2. Meeting with a Single Purpose.—Such a meeting has one, and only one, purpose. That is to study and solve the evangelistic and missionary evangelistic needs of that particular territory. The meeting is entirely constructive in its work, and through the work planned has never yet failed to accomplish the purpose of finding the laborers to reopen all closed

churches and begin to enter the ripe new fields, all within a set number of days (sixty or ninety) after the close of the congress. The entering of new fields has a continuation feature extending over a period of from one to five years.

There is an advantage in such a meeting. The one purpose is an advantage. The usual district convention necessarily must give time and hearing to so many interests outside of the local district needs that very little time, and always insufficient time, is given to actually surveying and planning a work which proposes to actually solve the evangelistic needs of the district. This meeting, having only the one purpose, focuses the whole time and attention on the one task and accomplishes it. There is no other interest to take either time or attention. This meeting should be conducted separately in time and place, but in harmony with the district plans made at the district convention.

There is a tremendous advantage in the systematic survey. This information is not confined to a card file in a secretary's office, but is displayed, and every man, woman and child is familiarized with every resource and need in the entire district.

3. Practical Planning.—Inasmuch as this kind of meeting not only proposes to secure definite information as to the needs, but is held for the specific purpose of devising ways to immediately begin to meet these needs in a rather comprehensive way, plenty of time is taken and large numbers are put to work on many hard-working committees so that the meeting may not close without full plans completed by

which a great, new, forward move may be put in immediate operation. With local and expert help and the new Group Evangelism vision which is instilled, it has always been found possible to accomplish these things.

4. A New Baptism in the Plea.—One of the features of the Group Evangelism congress is to secure the presentation of the Restoration plea by some one of the greatest preachers among us, so that all may again be fired and inspired by the plea which has been our passion, and which was the inspiration of all our greatest accomplishments. Inspiration and practical plans are our greatest need, and these are specialized upon in these meetings.

5. The Laborers Are Multiplied.—Instead of stopping with a vision of what ought to be done, and leaving a series of good resolutions on a secretary's record, these meetings pause to make provision for carrying out each plan of work determined upon. Scores of volunteers are enrolled, plans for their training are consummated, plans for their direction in the work are made, ministers volunteer for revival meetings in needy places, churches volunteer to send and support their ministers, workers volunteer to support and assist their ministers, etc. Gospel bands are formed, local training is provided, and all this is linked up with whatever evangelistic force may already be at work in the district.

Committees comprising five or ten good men each are appointed, instructed and trained in various phases of the work, so that when the meeting is over, instead of there being one lone district secre-

tary too busy to carry on district work, there are fifty to sixty men, each with a definitely assigned task, and all shaped and co-ordinated together in a working plan.

6. Lethargy and Indifference Overcome.—The question raised in a former lesson as to how best to overcome the usual lethargy and indifference is best answered just here. The enthusiasm of such a concerted move will do more to sweep away this indifference than the best efforts of many ministers, each working singly.

For the most part, our people are all theoretically interested in just such a forward move, but they are a practical people and need to be shown a practical and earnest concerted effort. They are then very willing to enter in and each do his full part.

7. Training Made Available.—Such immediate training as is needed to assist volunteers to get started in the various phases of Group Evangelism work is made available. The way in which this is worked out depends naturally on what the present facilities are in the district.

In addition to whatever facilities are already available, is provided such additional and extension facilities as may be needed by which every volunteer may begin immediate training in some phase of the work. The thought is not only to enroll those who may volunteer for life service and later attend college, but those who may give only part-time and lay service, and so plan the training that even the isolated, single volunteer in the rural church may yet begin some phase of study and training.

In general and in brief, these are the plans followed in the Group Evangelism congress. This is one of the good methods for beginning a Group Evangelism work. It is better than a single-church effort for the reason that it accomplishes much more, interests and enrolls many more in the work, and, by reason of its mass power, much more easily overcomes all indifference.

III. THE SCHOOL OF EVANGELISM.

One other good way to begin a concerted Group Evangelism work is by means of the school of evangelism. In the past two years we have worked out plans by which a short, intensive training-school may be made available to a county or district or State. While the school does not and can not carry out the program of planning and work that the congress does, yet it is much easier to promote in the beginning and does accomplish the creation of the new vision, conscience and purpose among all the churches co-operating. It thus paves the way and makes it easy for the ministers to get together and plan for a concerted program of work, with the assurance that their people are ready and prepared to back and assist them.

In these schools, expert teachers teach and drill on every phase of the evangelistic work from how to advertise a meeting to how to induct the converts into the work. We mention the school of evangelism as a valuable way to begin the work. We stand ready to assist any earnest group in such an enterprise.

IV. THE COUNTY PLAN.

It should be remembered that the subject and purpose of this Lesson X. is to answer the very practical questions of ways to *promote* Group Evangelism work. While there may be many good ways not yet discovered, and some that the extent of this lesson will not permit describing, yet we include at least some of the better ways. Among these is the county plan, which any earnest minister and church can promote in a county without expense or outside help.

1. Careful Survey.—First of all, interest at least some of the members of your own congregation through a course of talks or lessons such as this series. Next, plan to have your own members take a careful survey of the county, making note of everything that may be of interest.

2. Plan the Meeting.—Plan for an all-day service to which you invite all ministers and all members of all Christian Churches, large and small, open and closed, in the county. If desired, invite in as a speaker one who has had experience in Group Evangelism work, but this is not altogether necessary. The plan above may be followed if your congregation is the only live and active or interested congregation in the county. If there are others, the first move would no doubt be to try to secure the active interest and co-operation of as nearly as possible all Christian ministers and have all participate in the plan from the beginning of the survey. In either case, the all-day meeting, with no subject before the house

but the one of arousing a vision and enrolling volunteers enough to help reopen and man every closed church, is most important. At such a meeting the help of all ministers in the matter of contributed evangelism can be enrolled and the backing of their members can be secured. At this meeting volunteers are enrolled and plans for the campaign are made.

V. THE SINGLE-CHURCH PLAN.

There are many instances where neither the district nor the county plan is possible, and yet a minister earnestly desires to lead his people to a contributed-service work for the unreached and neglected. The procedure is somewhat the same. First, a number of people must be prepared by being led to see the need and the possibility. As has been said in a former lesson, there is no congregation so small but what it can, if it will, through its minister and members, begin a work single-handed for the more needy place that lies near. In such a case a number of sermons on personal service or a short study course in Personal or Group Evangelism is by far the best means of preparing the way.

VI. SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER.

Remember that vision, purpose and desire must first be aroused. Remember that nothing does now fire, or ever has fired and inspired, the disciples except two things. These are the plea for the restoration of New Testament Christianity—or, in other words, the simple gospel—and, second, a big and challenging worth-while task well laid out before

them. The work proposed must be actual, not theoretical. It must be specific, not visionary. It must be worth while, not small and insipid.

If some one of the suggested methods is followed with patience and tact, an amazing interest may soon be aroused where there was no interest and no thought for those of needy fields. An ounce of "come" is worth a pound of "go." In other words, our people are waiting to be shown and led, and in no instance, so far as we can learn, have they failed to respond with avidity when the minister has thus outlined the program of "missionary service" and proposed to lead. The only failures we know of are when the minister has caught the vision suddenly and has become impatient before his people had had time or opportunity to gain the vision. Patience and planning are two chief requisites.

STUDY HELPS.

1. Suggest at least four general ways in which Group Evangelism work may be promoted.

2. Name the steps in the preparation for a district Group Evangelism congress.

3. What is the advantage in such a meeting with a single purpose?

4. What are some of the worth-while features of such a convocation?

5. Discuss the value of having a largely increased number of ministers and members assigned to definite parts of the task of district evangelization.

6. Why can such a meeting succeed in overcoming lethargy and indifference?

7. What is the value in having each volunteer begin some form of immediate training and service?

8. How does the school of evangelism differ from the Group Evangelism congress?

9. Describe the county plan of promoting Group Evangelism.

10. Describe a plan by which a single church may promote Group Evangelism.

11. Mention a number of things to be kept in mind by those who would arouse an interest in such work.

12. How may the knowledge gained in these lessons be spread to many others?

LESSON XI.

HOW TO PLANT AND ORGANIZE A NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Lesson: Acts 8:26-40.
Text: Isa. 55:11.

I. Purpose of Study XI.

IN this series of practical lessons on finding the laborers and directing them to the task, we feel that the instruction would be incomplete unless some specific suggestions be given on how to proceed in entering a new community. Many good ministers have had experience as pastors of churches, but have had no experience in entering new fields. Many are willing to go, but are at a loss as to just where or how to begin and what to do first. Of course, no set rules can be laid down, but suggestions based on experience may prove helpful.

Also, it has never occurred to many of our workers in the local congregations that there is a very practical work which they can perform in the big and sacred missionary task of carrying the plea to, and planting the church in, new places. Many times the initiative, enthusiasm and plans for entering a new community must originate with a lay member.

II. WHY NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHES SHOULD BE PLANTED.

1. Christ Commanded It.—Christ said: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel [not interpretations of the gospel or creeds] to every creature." We are under direct orders to push and promote His cause. We, as Christians, are duty-bound to extend His kingdom; *i. e.*, to spread His church everywhere.

2. Our Duty as Christians.—If, as Christians, we plant a church, it certainly should be a New Testament church. The church we give our energies to plant, or help to plant, should be a New Testament church in name, in its practices, in its organization, in its teaching, in its discipline. If we do not do this, we are not loyal to our Master's command. If we help plant churches which are not New Testament churches in name, practice, organization, teaching and discipline, we are but helping to prolong confusion and division. We are helping to promote the very thing from which Christ prayed that His cause might be spared.

3. Our Plea Demands It.—As a people we have always been definitely committed to the cause of the union of all Christ's followers on a definite New Testament basis. That basis is on:

(1) The name "Christian," which is Scriptural and is already universally loved, respected and accepted.

(2) The name "Church of Christ," which is Scriptural, and which is the only name universally

agreeable, sanctioned by all and the one name possible as a united name.

(3) The New Testament as the only divine and authoritative rule of practice on which all can finally agree.

(4) The strictly Scriptural command, precedent and example for the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, as the only possible rallying-point for a final reunion.

(5) A strictly Scriptural and divinely appointed form of organization for the churches as the only form of organization possible, to be finally accepted by all.

4. The Only Practical Way.—The only way to bring this plea to all people is to plant New Testament churches which teach and preach these things everywhere. Give the people actual examples of non-sectarian preaching; show them non-sectarian churches; give all people a chance to be Scripturally baptized, wear a Scriptural name, and belong to a Scriptural church.

5. Consistency Demands It.—This is briefly the program followed by our people for a hundred years, or since the days of Alexander Campbell. If this program was right then, it is right now. If it is wrong or not worth while now, it was wrong or not worth while then. If this program was worth starting and working at for a century, it is surely worth carrying on to final accomplishment. If it is worth doing partly, it is worth doing completely.

6. To Protect Our Own.—Another great reason for planting New Testament churches is that we are

losing thousands every year because so many who are simply Christians move to places where there are no churches of Christ, and, to find church homes, they are tempted to sacrifice Scriptural names and practices and are lost to the cause in which they are so much needed.

7. For Those Who Never Heard.—Another great reason for planting churches of Christ, or New Testament churches, is that there are literally thousands who are dissatisfied with the confusion of sectarianism, but who have never heard the simple and Scriptural plea. There are many who have been so confused and disgusted with the babble of religious teachings that they have turned to unbelief and indifference. Many of these, on hearing a simple Scriptural gospel, accept it gladly.

8. In Payment of an Honest Debt.—A final reason for planting New Testament churches is that we, who have had a chance to hear and know this simple, beautiful and Scriptural teaching of the way of life, are selfish and recreant to our duty if we do not pass it on to others.

III. PREPARATION FOR PLANTING.

Just as planting corn presumes that the farmer has thought to prepare the ground, so should it be remembered that the ground may need to be prepared for planting a church. Sometimes there are conditions that make it possible to enter in immediately and begin to reap a harvest, which may be garnered into the church storehouse, but again there are other fields that have to have careful clear-

ing and plowing. We should not avoid these fields just because they do not appear already plowed for us. There are a number of ways to prepare fields.

1. An Outpost Bible School.—In a former lesson we have mentioned the Bible-school method of church planting. It is a good method, because the work can be started by the members from the ranks long before the evangelist may be able to arrive on the field. It is good because our plea comprehends that "faith cometh by hearing the word of God." The procedure is the same as in the great commission when it was given, "Teach, baptize, teach."

2. A Careful Survey.—This again may be done by the gospel teams or workers from the ranks. Members and prospective members can be located. A hall or other place for the meeting may be found and many preparatory details looked after.

IV. WHAT WE MEAN BY PLANTING.

1. Distinction between Planting and Organizing.—An acorn planted and a full-grown oak are two different things. Too many are determined that they must see or be definitely assured of the full-grown oak before they plant the acorn. A church of Christ when planted may be simple indeed when compared with the complex structure into which some have later grown. It should hardly be expected that a church which has just been planted should have to conform to the standards of organization of an old and developed church.

2. What Planting Means.—To plant a church of Christ would not necessarily mean more than the

banding together, in the name "Christian" and under the name "church of Christ," of a group of baptized believers in Christ for the purpose of reading or studying the word of God, following its precepts in life and work and breaking bread on the Lord's Day. This is a church of Christ in its simplest form; two or three gathered together in Christ's name and Christ in their midst; without organizations, without church-house, without employed minister, without officers, and yet none the less a church of Christ. A church-house, an employed minister, various organizations or agencies, may be added, but they are added to a church of Christ, rather than constitute it.

Various methods, which we shall name later, may be used for planting churches of Christ, but, after all, the beginnings of a church are much the same.

3. A Needed Lesson.—This word needs to be added, however. Christians should be taught to be satisfied to go on with the work even with the simplest form of organization, rather than to compare themselves with complex or "standardized" forms of organization and decide it is futile to go on unless they can immediately add all the features of a full-grown organization. In other words, an oak-tree newly come up need not decide to die because it can not be a full-grown oak overnight.

V. WHERE CHURCHES CAN BE PLANTED.

1. Local Disciples Not Necessary.—First of all, do not think that there must be already a number of disciples in the neighborhood being considered. That

is a non-essential. The chances are that if there are disciples in the neighborhood, they will not be found until after you start the work. Some of them you will not find until the battle is fought and the victory assured. Some of them you may never find. Some whom you do find may be openly opposed to what you propose to do. Apparently the reason for this is that some disciples in a new community feel that if a church of Christ were started they could not feel comfortable if they did not go into it, but that, if they did unite, it would cost them money and work. On the other hand, if there is no church of Christ started, they can have a good excuse for being mere attendants and onlookers in some church in which they are under no responsibility, and where they are continually petted with the hope of winning them. Do not be disappointed if you should find no encouragement from some local disciples. While there are good, faithful souls hungering for the plea and the communion service, there are others in almost every community that will defeat the cause if they can. Go not by them.

Next, do not shape your decision by the advice of members of other churches. In all our experience in church planting, we do not remember one instance where we were not advised that there were as many churches as the community could support, and that there was no room for a church of Christ.

2. Finding Places.—Let every disciple keep his eyes open for existing or needed schoolhouse and neighborhood Bible schools. Wherever there is or can be gathered a Bible school, there is the seed-corn

for a church. Make a study of every village in the township, every township in the county, every town down or up the trolley line or railroad on which you live, or every ward in the city in which you live. In some one of these places is the place that is waiting for you to promote the project of starting a church of Christ. Perhaps in your own neighborhood there is no church of Christ, and there is the place. You may know some one who is a member of the church of Christ, but who is living where there is no church of Christ. Begin an active correspondence with him and induce him to start the work.

VI. METHODS OF PLANTING CHURCHES.

There are no set or mechanical rules or methods, but the ways in which most churches of Christ have been started would fall roughly under some one of the following six ways. We shall mention and briefly discuss some of them: Bible-school method, communion-service method, revival-meeting method, church-in-a-day method, church-in-a-home method and swarming method. The method is named after that which was first done.

1. Bible-school Method.—The Bible-school method is one of the very best. Many times it is practical where the ground is not yet ready for an actual church. There is no reason why a Christian Bible school should not be in reach of everybody in the country.

We discuss this but briefly here, because it has been touched on in former lessons.

2. The Communion-service Method.—Another method is suitable to those communities where there is a group of disciples who may be brought together at a home or hall for the communion service. Any group of disciples that will be loyal enough to meet regularly for communion and Bible study will eventually find an evangelist or pastor who will appreciate their loyalty enough that he will help them find the way to a meeting or whatever steps are next most needed. Remember what Christ said about "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there will I be in the midst of them." It is actually so.

A visiting minister or near-by elders can thus help to plant churches. The local disciples should be called together and the meaning of the communion service carefully explained. If possible, they should be brought to pledge, individually, that from that day forward this monument erected to Jesus Christ in the community shall never be removed or disregarded so long as one of them shall remain in the community.

3. The Revival-meeting Method.—This would consist of either the revival conducted by an employed missionary evangelist, or a meeting freely contributed by a near-by pastor and his people. The methods of procedure are much the same in either case. We here discuss the *volunteer* or *contributed* revival.

One of the first methods is one to be pursued by a church, led, of course, by the minister or some individual in the church. Let the church appoint a committee or some one to spy out the land and re-

port the most needy, accessible place where a church might and should be planted. None but people of vision and faith should be on such a committee. When the place has been decided upon, send a group of good men, or men and women, to further lay plans, determine on the church-house, hall, empty store building or tent or tabernacle location. Plan for lighting, seating, song-books, advertising. Study the community, list all interesting data and determine the best time for a meeting. Then arrange to carry on your own local work for about three weeks without the minister, and see that he has his salary promptly, as he will probably need it more promptly because of being away from home. Where the location is close enough, plan to send delegations of interested singers, personal workers, callers, hand-bill distributors. Do not send all at once, but arrange so there will not be a feast one night and a famine the next.

Where tent or tabernacle is to be used, it will usually be found that the lumber can be borrowed or rented at not more than the tent rental would be. A tabernacle is much more satisfactory, in most places, due to weather conditions. This is the revival-meeting method of planting a church. Estimate that about half the expense can be raised where the meeting is being held. Get a group of members to back your pastor by underwriting the entire expense, to be paid pro rata as needed, or if needed.

VII. How to Organize a Church of Christ.

All former discussion has been on planting. Organization follows planting. We shall here discuss only

the simple forms of organizing as they may apply to a newly planted church.

1. Beginnings Must Come before Completions.—A completed organization is frequently impossible, and also impracticable, in the beginning days of a church. A complex organization is neither needed nor desirable in a small and newly started congregation. We begin with the simplest beginnings. In fact, a group of baptized believers may associate themselves into a church of Christ, meet to study the Word, break bread, teach and even baptize believers, without any duly elected officers at all. We believe that no one would deny that such an organization would still be a church of Christ.

2. Beginnings of Organization.—It is frequently true in a new congregation that there is no one who can measure up at all to the Scriptural requirements for an elder or a deacon. In such a case committees can be appointed to look after and attend to the various functions and work for one year, until some, by their faithfulness, zeal and knowledge, have shown their fitness for church officers.

3. A Form to Use in Organizing.—An advisable first move in organizing a new church of Christ is for a group of baptized believers to offer themselves as charter members, and adopt and sign a charter-membership declaration somewhat as follows:

We, the undersigned, hereby enroll our names as charter members of the church of Christ at ....., and declare our purpose to be as follows:

(1) To form an organization to be known as the church of Christ of .....

(2) That this organization shall have and use the New Testament as its one and only rule of faith and practice.

(3) That the terms of admission to this congregation shall be identical with the gospel terms of pardon.

(4) That the purpose of the congregation shall be to carry out the commands of Christ as suggested in the great commission; to preach the simple and entire gospel of pardon, Christian life and Christian duty at home and abroad; to encourage and admonish each other to mutual edification and Christlikeness, and to lend our individual and organized aid and support to all moral and civic betterment.

Committees may be appointed on place for meetings, preparation and administration of the communion service, sick visitation and mercy and help, securing preaching or preacher or sermon to be read by members, arrangements for Bible school, finance, etc.

4. Methods of Selecting Officers.—In cases where there is available, suitable material for regular church officers, there are two usual methods of choosing the first officers of a new church. One is for the evangelist (where there is an evangelist) to appoint elders, deacons and committees for the first year. There are some things to be said for and some against this procedure. The other method is for the congregation to choose, by election, such officers and committees as are needed. In this case it is a good plan for a well-chosen committee, of the best and wisest in the church, to be appointed as a nominating committee, who shall go over the matter earnestly and prayerfully and make nominations or sugges-

tions after careful thought has been put into it. This avoids the thoughtless snap-judgment tendency in choosing officers. This committee's report is then given to the congregation for revision or adoption. It is advisable to have the evangelist or a visiting minister conduct an ordination or installation service, in which the qualifications and duties of church officers are thoroughly impressed upon officers and all members.

STUDY HELPS.

1. Give eight reasons for planting New Testament churches.

2. Where lies the duty of a plain Christian in the matter of helping to plant churches?

3. Name some of the foundation stones in the base of our plea for Christian union.

4. What is the practical way to get this plea to all people?

5. What duty do we owe our own brethren who are scattered?

6. Do we owe it to those who have never heard the plea to take it to them?

7. Mention some steps in preparation for planting a church.

8. Distinguish between planting a church and organizing a church.

9. What is perhaps the simplest form in which a New Testament church can exist?

10. What advantage in teaching small groups of Christians to be content with simple forms of church work and organization?

11. Discuss the matter of choosing a place to plant a church.

12. Can the decision depend on the presence or advice of local disciples?

13. Mention ways by which places can be found.

14. Name and describe a number of methods for entering new communities with churches of Christ.

15. Mention some of the preliminary steps in the revival-meeting method.

16. Submit a simple form to be used in organizing a local group.

17. Name two ways by which officers may be chosen for a new congregation.

LESSON XII.

HOW TO BUILD A SERMON

Lesson: Acts 17:22-31.
Text: 2 Tim. 2:15.

I. Reasons for This Lesson.

INASMUCH as this series of lessons is intended to help toward actual and practical work in the matter of opening closed churches and Bible schools, and in entering new points by establishing Bible schools and churches, we feel that many students will want a few practical suggestions on sermon-building.

These suggestions are incorporated for the help, primarily, of gospel-band workers, lay speakers and others who may have need for suggestions in the matter of shaping talks. In fact, every Christian ought to give thought to cultivating the ability to make a few well-built talks on the plea.

II. First Things.

1. Something to Say.—The first thing in preparing a sermon, speech or talk is to have something to say, and the second is to be able to say it. Every Christian knows what he did in becoming a Christian, and ought to be able to tell another what he himself did and why.

2. Starting-points.—There are a number of starting-points. One may choose a text which appeals to him, and develop a talk on the text. Matt. 28: 18-20, for example. Or, he may choose a subject as a starting-point and then choose a text which fits the subject, and proceed to develop the subject. "What I Did in Becoming a Christian, and Why I Did It," would be a good subject. 1 Pet. 3:15 would be a suitable text: ". . . being ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you." Again, one may take a chapter and read and comment or teach as he reads. This is called expository preaching, and is really the kind of preaching that a Bible-school teacher is doing every time he teaches a lesson well. 1 Cor. 1:10-30 would suggest itself as a good passage for such a sermon, having the purpose of teaching Christian union.

III. THE OUTLINE.

Most beginners do not appreciate the value of outlining. They may have many thoughts, but they are difficult to write out, because the thoughts are in a jumble. The outline is the skeleton on which the talk is to be builded. Its purpose is to help to separate and classify what one would say. Such classification makes the speech easier to build, easier to render, easier to be understood. The outline is important in all except the expository sermon.

There are in general three parts to every discourse—introduction, argument and conclusion. A

sermon has four parts—introduction, argument, conclusion and appeal. With very few exceptions, these four things will comprise every well-built sermon, whether long or short.

1. The Introduction.—The introduction to a sermon is an exceedingly important part. It may serve any one or all of a dozen purposes; therefore, introductions may be of various kinds. The introduction may have for its purpose:

(1) To give the hearers a number of facts which the speaker may wish to use later, or to give facts which will bring the minds of the hearers to a sympathetic attitude, or to give information necessary to the understanding of what is to follow. These facts may be statistics; facts of history, ancient, modern or current; scientific facts, Scripture facts, etc.

(2) A purpose of the introduction may be to center the attention of the people in the audience, and whet their expectations and appetites for what is to follow.

(3) The purpose of the introduction may be to reveal the reason for the discussion of the chosen subject and show its importance.

(4) The introduction may be merely to prepare the sympathies of the people for the message. The word "introduction" means "leading into," and thus a text, a story, or any one of many things, may be used.

(5) The introduction may be used to give a brief statement of the purpose and intent of the entire sermon.

The introduction may be such as to accomplish all these things at once. Whether or not the sermon is clear and interesting, whether it brings conviction or misses fire, may depend on the introduction.

2. The Argument. We use the term "argument" in its more general and rhetorical sense. We do not mean that every sermon necessarily has to "argufy." The argument is the body of the sermon. It may consist of logically arranged reasoning, or an accumulation of proven facts and truths, or a series of points each proving or elaborating the theme, or a series of widely scattered facts and arguments, each of which comes back to and strikes the main point another sledge-hammer blow. Illustration, elaboration, argumentation, instruction, all have their place in the body or argument. The treatment must be broad enough, deep enough, fair enough that it will be conclusive, satisfying, convincing.

3. The Conclusion.—The conclusion may be a brief, running summary culminating in a climax. It is a summing up of the evidence intended to complete and clinch conviction. It must have a close and apparent relation to the subject as suggested and prepared for in the introduction. Great bundles of information or argument handed out unsummarized may please and instruct, or they may merely confuse and dumfound the hearer. The conclusion should make sure that the theme has been clearly, completely and conclusively presented.

4. The Appeal.—Christianity is an appeal to life, to action. No sermon, therefore, is complete when a proposition is merely proven. The whole purpose of

preaching culminates in the appeal to action. All the rest is but groundwork for the appeal. The appeal may be to become a Christian, to take forward steps in Christian life or living, or for individual or general action, but a sermon without an appeal at least strongly inferred is a ship without a port, a journey without a purpose.

5. Reasons for Outlines.—These four things are the essentials of every interesting, instructive, purposeful sermon. Outlines should be tested by some such measure, until one's mind simply contracts the habit of thinking on any and every subject in some such systematic way.

The slipshod, loose-jointed, scatter-shot, hit-and-miss preaching is frequently due to having no bounds set in an outline. The outline may be useful to help one know and remember what to say; it is more useful to keep one on his main theme and keep him in mind of what not to say.

6. Learning to Outline.—The only way we know to learn to outline sermons is to practice. Outline scores of subjects and themes which you may never use. Make a practice of noticing the skeleton or outline which ought to be apparent to you in every discourse of every kind to which you listen. Use a notebook and jot down the outline of every speech you hear for awhile. Test each of these outlines for the essentials.

IV. ELEMENTS TO STRIVE FOR.

We can but mention here some of the elements that make a sermon effective. To be effective, a

speaker ought to be, first, in earnest; second, know the Scripture he uses; third, positive; fourth, clear; fifth, simple; sixth, conclusive; seventh, brief and pleasing. Continually test your efforts by these seven tests if you would gain attention, hold attention, make your hearers understand your message, win them to the truth and move them for good.

1. Earnestness, Fire, Enthusiasm.—An otherwise fine message, delivered cold, is liable to fail to strike fire. It takes fire to start fire. The same message delivered to the same crowd, first by one who lacks earnestness and again by one who is in dead earnest and shows it, will show very different results from the two deliveries.

2. Scriptural Accuracy.—Not a great deal of Scripture will be used in any one speech, at least not so much but what one can make sure of a thorough familiarity with the pronunciation, meaning, scene, setting and accurate quotation. It is wrong to garble Scripture.

3. Positive Statement of Truth.—Know the Word and deliver it as *God's* word and not as *your own.* Know what you are talking about and deliver it with that conviction and positive pronouncement that alone can ever dispel doubt. It takes positive conviction and positive delivery to convince and convict.

4. Clear.—It is better to say much less and make one or two points clear than to say many things and leave the hearer confused. Most folks, who are moved to decision or action, are moved by seeing one thing clearly, rather than by a multiplicity of points. Simplicity and good illustrations will help.

5. Simple.—If you want a reputation for being learned, then use big words. If you want to deliver God's message to dying men and win them, then be simple. Never use a big word if a simple one can be found to take its place.

6. Conclusive.—Conclusive preaching is that kind that covers the whole ground. Not only teach men the truth, but *show* them that this is the whole truth and that there is no other truth on this subject. Show them, for example, that not only is Christ "a way," but that He is "the way, the truth, and the life," and that there is no other way, no other truth and no possibility of eternal life outside Christ.

7. Pleasing.—There is no reason why a preacher should assume a belligerent or hostile attitude toward the people before him. They may be ignorant, but are not necessarily pig-headed. In other words, do not argue with or against the people before you. Just teach the simple, plain truth simply, earnestly, clearly, positively, conclusively and sweetly.

V. ILLUSTRATING THE THOUGHT.

Very little can here be added on the matter of illustration. Illustrations are valuable indeed. Jesus used them constantly. Illustrations are valuable for five things:

1. To make teaching plain.
2. To fix and hold a truth in the memory.
3. To bring back and center distracted attention.
4. To temporarily rest an audience from continued intense interest and strain.
5. To open heart doors for the truth.

VII. HELPS IN SERMON-BUILDING.

1. Choose the Subject.—We can here make but the beginning of suggestions on how to build the framework of a talk or sermon. First choose the subject or theme. Suppose you wish to talk on repentance. That will be at the same time a subject and a theme. From the concordance many verses on repentance can be located, one of which may serve as a text. Acts 17:30 will prove a good text.

2. Make the Outline.—First make rough divisions of the subject as follows:

(1) Where repentance is not found.
(2) Where repentance is found.
(3) Where repentance will do no good.
(4) Where repentance is not needed.

3. Work Out Each Division.—Each division then may be worked out with Scripture, illustrated and expanded. Introduction, conclusion and appeal may be added and the outline is complete. To illustrate the next step.

4. Suggested Sermon on Repentance.—

(1) Where repentance is not found.
a. Not found by closing one's eyes on the truth.
b. Not found in worldly indifference, etc., etc.
(2) Where repentance is found.
a. Found in a knowledge of the truth.
(*a*) The truth about God.
(*b*) The truth about man.
(*c*) The truth about life and death.
(*d*) The truth about sin.
(*e*) The truth about the judgment.

b. Sometimes found in sorrow.

c. In open-minded search for safety.

(3) Where repentance will do no good.

a. In the judgment-day.

b. After death or in the cemetery.

c. After the heart has hardened and ears become dull.

(4) Where repentance is not needed.

a. Before the age of accountability.

b. After all appeals to obey the gospel have been rejected.

5. **The Conclusion.**—Then the conclusion may be added, which comes back to the text and shows that repentance can be found here and now, that it will do good and is positively needed and necessary. A brief introduction and a final appeal complete the sermon.

VIII. SUGGESTED SUBJECTS FOR OUTLINES.

We close the lesson and the series of studies by suggesting a list of sermon topics which can be developed, outlined and used by the students. These subjects are intended to be simple enough for the beginner, and yet are profound enough for the experienced.

1. What Becoming a Christian Will Do for Us.
2. A Foundation that Is Safe.
3. Why Obedience to the Gospel?
4. What Must I Do to Be Saved?
5. Why I Am a Christian.
6. God's Love and Man's Indifference.
7. Christ the Way, the Truth and the Life.
8. Why a Burial in Baptism?

9. The Name "Christian."
10. Rewards for Christian Living.

STUDY HELPS.

1. Name the starting-points in building a sermon or talk.
2. What is the value of an outline?
3. What are the three main parts of every discourse?
4. What are the four parts of a sermon?
5. What are some of the purposes of the introduction?
6. What is meant by the "argument"? What may the argument contain?
7. What is the nature and purpose of the conclusion?
8. Why the appeal as a part of a sermon?
9. How learn to outline talks or discourses?
10. Name seven elements of an effective sermon. Discuss the importance of each.
11. Name five purposes for which illustrations are useful.
12. Submit a subject and show the developments in outlining.
13. Submit outlines on five of the topics suggested in this lesson.